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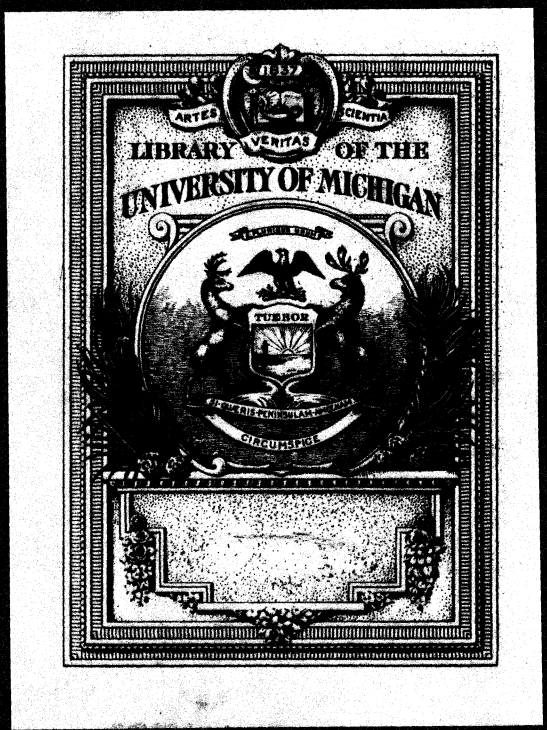
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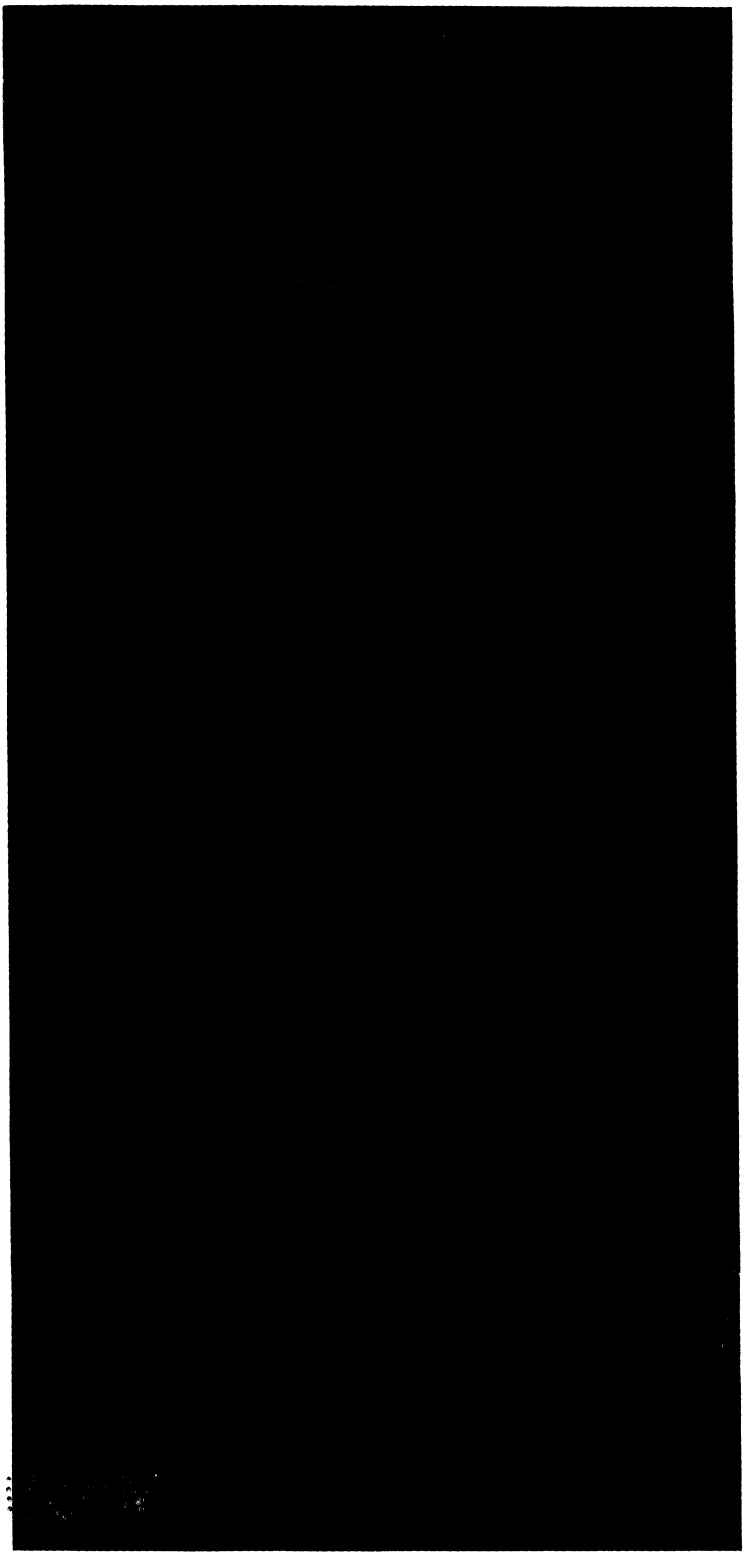

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MODERN ARTISTS

APROPOS

WHILE the thrill of the modern spirit both in art and in life should obviously be the dominant note of the following pages, no conscious sacrifices have been made in behalf of any given theory or thesis. The aim has not been laboriously to trace the origin and development of certain more or less formative influences, but to reflect such tendencies in terms frankly specific and personal. Although, during the period covered, which embraces something over a century of production, the profile of art in general has yearly become more and more distinct, that which here takes precedence is the persuasive magic of the artist himself. In order the better to picture those contagious forces which are to-day vitalizing art in all lands the selection has purposely been broad and eclectic rather than narrow or local. A number of characteristic figures—not always the conventionally greatest or best known—have thus been chosen from various countries, and the attempt has been made to give a sense of the individuality of each man treated, and through the individual a feeling for the conditions and surroundings, aesthetic and social, of his actual or adopted home. The personal element and the element of nationality will hence inevitably prove the constant factors in this series of interpretations. The former quality has long since won its title to consideration. It is as yet, however, only vaguely realized that the latter is one of the artist's richest possessions. There are few more amiable fallacies than

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the pretension that art should strive to be international and cosmopolitan, for in point of fact the men who have best succeeded in becoming so are those whose performances have most emphatically borne the particular stamp of time and place. Elusive though unmistakable, sensitive though innately unchangeable, nationality is an element which should never, and indeed can never, be entirely overlooked. Every artist is in essence a nationalist. By freely expressing himself he cannot fail to suggest that larger heritage of which he shares but a slender portion. Though conforming to these general outlines, the present volume is not meant to be either speculative or sternly critical. It is frankly sympathetic and appreciative, and, in as far as possible, each man in turn has been permitted to plead his own cause through the facts of his life and the works of eye and hand. While it is true that the varied manifestations of nineteenth-century art may here be followed from chapter to chapter with sufficient accuracy, the individual himself will, it is hoped, always be found to stand the more firmly and humanly in the foreground of these sketches. Grateful acknowledgments are due the artists themselves whose efforts and achievements have been a continuous source of inspiration in the preparation of the ensuing pages, to owners whose paintings are herewith reproduced, and to those editors who have already welcomed certain sections of the material in its early and fugitive form.

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JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD

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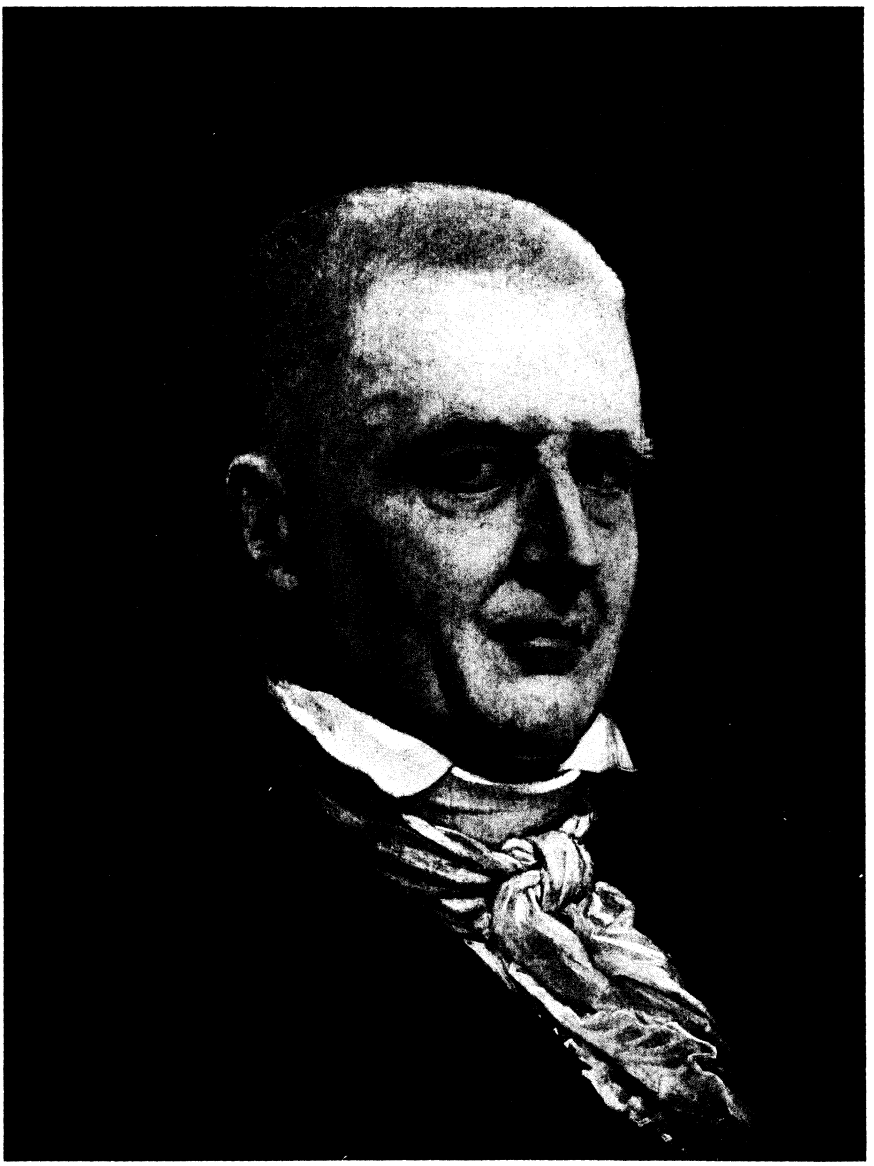

JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

[*The Louvre, Paris*]

JEAN-HONORÉ FRAGONARD

NOWHERE and in no age has art reflected life with more intimate fidelity than in France during the eighteenth century. The accord between that which was and its transcription in pigment or marble, in coloured chalk or terra-cotta, here revealed a perfection seldom attained before or since. With unfailing spirit and accuracy the painters, sculptors, and architects of the Reign of Rococo gave to all they touched the precise physiognomy of the period. They were incomparably true to existing conditions, to that rose-tinted convention which was not to be crushed until the red dawn of the Revolution. Although it seems to stand apart, to display an abandon quite its own, French art of the eighteenth century recalls on one side the inflated eloquence of the Grand Siècle, and foreshadows, in a measure, all that came after. Scattered here and there throughout the span of Louis XIV are various gestures in bronze or plaster which presage the coming of Watteau, Pater, Lancret, and their followers. Certain of Coysevox's nymphs, Girardon's fountains, and chance wreaths, garlands, and cupids on palace wall or ceiling, hint that, smothered beneath this solemn pretence, lurked a gleam of joy and beauty which might some day relieve the august pomp of Le Brun's 'Histoire du Grand Monarque' and the stateliness of Le Nôtre's parks and gardens. If under de Maintenon all was rigid and constrained, official and perfunctory, with la Pompadour came a welcome freedom from control. Society had been too long on parade.

Unnatural restraint gave way to licence frankly human, and austere splendour was replaced by the magic of personal enchantment. As in life, so in art, there were no traces of pain or sorrow. A feverish reversion to pleasure was the only note sounded. Skies were perpetually blue, gallants languished about strumming guitars, and the greensward was dotted with shepherds and shepherdesses beribboned and operatic. Existence became a pastoral now French, now Italian, now Spanish, and the world gaily embarked in flower-decked galleys for Cythera, unmindful of hoarse mutterings which were soon to sweep aside this fleeting moment of nonchalance. In essence the entire movement was a return to paganism, not the broad paganism of earlier days, but an ethereal paganism recording all the inconsequence of its hour. For the time being standards were strangely confused. Religion as well as reality was obscured. The crucifix and the crown of thorns were forgotten. Those bambini who tempered the zealous exaltation of numerous Umbrian and Flemish canvases, who with Raphael or van Dyck added such spontaneous charm, became mischievous amorini bent on missions dubious and diverting. Venus slipped into the niche so long sacred to Mary of Nazareth and Psyche shone cream-white amid the green of Versailles leafage.

The chosen poet of all this radiant subversion, the one who best caught its particular accent, was not Watteau, so tinged with pensiveness, nor Boucher, who possessed every gift save the gift of truth, but Jean-Honoré Fragonard. It was he whose purpose was clearest, he who reduced desire to its most infectious terms, he who joyously revived so many lost kisses and neglected caresses. Throughout his life Fragonard played and perpetuated the Comedy of Love. Femininity, perverse and endearing, he glorified in countless miniatures, portraits, fans, and decorative panels. Though he came last among the painters of Elysium, he imprisoned a beauty which had escaped all,

which had even eluded Antiquity and the Renaissance. This Cherubino of art had no avowed message for mankind, no definite lesson to instil. He seemed content to follow prevailing modes. He wished only to delight and amuse, sometimes with fancies that recall not alone Ariosto and Boccaccio but the mellower wantonness of Propertius and Alciphron. And yet in the whole range of his production there is never the slightest note of insistence. It is an art which persuades, never repulses. Each of these little goddesses of pleasure can say, with Mozart's Zerlina, " Je consens, et je refuse." While having its origin in the desire to please and to attract, this art is nevertheless considerably more than a propitiation, a mere courting of favour whether of the public at large or of some wealthy patron. In addition to being typical of his epoch Jean-Honoré Fragonard also ranks as a distinct precursor, as an unconscious, though unquestionable initiator. Long decried and ignored, he stands to-day among the most significant and original of eighteenth-century painters. In one phase or another of his work he anticipates most of those truths of vision and treatment from which has sprung the vitality of the modern school. Beneath his astounding facility is a science which few have taken pains to discover. Nor is he always merely gay and volatile, for in the midst of his playfulness there sometimes escapes a cry of passionate tenderness or foreboding. Though he made no pretensions, and professed no theories, few artists the world over have surpassed in felicity, animation, and imperishable charm this light-hearted son of la Provence.

Born at Grasse, 5 April 1732, in a little house in the rue de la Porte-Neuve near the place aux Herbes, the boy spent the first fifteen years of his life at home. Famed for its flowers and its perfumes, encircled by a silver-green fringe of olive trees, with, beyond, the sparkling rim of the sea, Grasse could scarcely fail to influence the lad's early impressions. Always, in his can-

vases, sway and nod the trees and blossoms of his native land bathed in a violet mist blown from across the plain of Cannes. To the very last the background of his art retained those same dark masses of foliage, those bright flashes of colour, and the now gleaming, now vaporous skies of his birthplace. The son of a modest glovemaker, who was in turn descended from the Fragonardo, or Fragonardi, of near Milan, Jean-Honoré found himself, at sixteen, articled to a notary in Paris, whither the family had gone in order to better their fortunes, Fragonard père having meanwhile failed owing to certain unlucky investments. Local tradition, with its infallible instinct for the picturesque and appropriate, avers that the youth made the trip all the way from Grasse afoot in company with Claude Gérard, one of whose daughters he was later to marry. He already wished to become a painter, an ambition which the good notary of the Châtelet heartily approved, so at the end of a few doleful weeks his mother took him to Boucher, then at the pinnacle of his fame. Too busy to instruct beginners, the facile " Peintre des Grâces et des Amours " sent the boy to his friend, Chardin, then labouring with patient, searching conviction amid humble surroundings in the rue Princesse. It was inevitable that the sprightly, irrepressible little Meridional should have made scant progress under the sober painter of the bourgeoisie. Just as when with the notary, he spent most of the time wandering, wide-eyed and enthusiastic, about the teeming streets. He also visited the dim, solemn churches of the capital where hung so many rich toned canvases, and these he would eagerly copy from memory on returning home. Convinced, after some six months, that he could learn little from Chardin, the youthful aspirant went again to Boucher, this time bearing an armful of drawings. His reception proved different, for Boucher, recognizing his talent, welcomed him at once, and before long he was assisting with various decorative compositions or making replicas of

LA POURSUITE

By Jean-Honoré Fragonard

[*Courtesy of J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq.*]

Withdrawn

his fecund master's pictures. Alert and voluble, Fragonard instinctively felt at home in the big studio in the Bibliothèque du Roi which was thronged at all hours by pupils, models, and men and women of fashion, and where he must have seen " la belle Murphy " somewhat oftener than he did the seductive and easily consoled Mme. Boucher. The painter whose false and captivating Dianas and Auroras fluttered on every wall or plafond proved a stimulating preceptor. He was the incarnation of the Rococo spirit in all its supple elegance, and this spirit Fragonard was quick to absorb. So rapid was the newcomer's progress that in 1752, though not a student of the Académie, he competed for and won the Grand Prix, his nearest rival being Saint-Aubin, whose chagrin was such that he thenceforth renounced painting for engraving. From the free activity of Boucher's studio Fragonard next passed to the École Royale des Élèves protégés and the more restrained guidance of Carle Van Loo, where he awaited his turn to proceed to Rome a full-fledged pensioner of the king.

The years in Rome, five in all, which were passed at the Palazzo Mancini under the not always approving eye of Natoire, or in the enlightening company of the abbé de Saint-Non, less abbé than distinguished amateur of the arts, held unmeasured richness for Fragonard. At first overwhelmed by Michelangelo and Raphael, he soon found his level among such masters as Barocci, Pietro da Cortona, Solimena, and Tiepolo. These he copied assiduously, readily catching the soft glow of purple light, or the sheen of satin robe held in place by jewelled hand. While Natoire and the Académie did much for him, Saint-Non did more, and it was during those lingering summer months spent at the Villa d'Este in company with the abbé that Fragonard first responded to the silent throb of the antique world and the palpitating atmospheric beauty about him. From time to time they were joined by Hubert Robert, who was also at the

Académie, the three thus cementing an enduring friendship. While most of Fragonard's studies after the older painters show accuracy and vitality, none can compare in interest to his ' L'Allée ombreuse,' with its great vault of foliage meeting overhead, or his ' Vue prise à la Villa d'Este.' Here was the real Fragonard, sensitive, submissive, and displaying a sympathy with Roman life and scene which must be partially accounted for by his Italian ancestry and that unmistakable affinity which exists between the Campagna and the country about Grasse. From the very first he appears to have seen nature and natural forms not boldly and sharply, but enveloped in a caressing ambience—blue, blond, or golden. Seated before his easel in one of those majestic oak or cypress lined avenues, with here a vine-covered wall, and there a flower-grown fountain, the receptive, observant youth did not fail to note that vibrant play of diffused light and shade which is one of art's most precious discoveries. He never knew that what he was striving for would one day be called impressionism. He only saw and suggested certain effects as best he could, yet it was a full century before his efforts were to be surpassed.

On his return to Paris full of high enthusiasm, Fragonard, after a period of indecision, made a commanding debut at the Salon of 1765 with ' Corésus se sacrifie pour sauver Callirhoé.' The amateurs applauded, Diderot praised him, and the king ordered the picture to be reproduced in Gobelins tapestry. His triumph was largely theatric, for his theme had been taken from the poem by Roy with music by Destouches. While it was not Gluck, it pleased the fancy of the public, and a dignified academic career seemed to await the young Provençal. Yet he somehow never duplicated the dramatic fervour of this composition, the passionate reds of these flowing robes or the beseeching whites of these breasts and arms. Although purchased for the State, it was several years before Marigny paid him for

the work, and meanwhile the one-time pupil of Boucher was fated to conquer Cythera, not Olympus. Through the kind offices of Doyen, who was himself too prudish to accept the commission, Fragonard was enabled to paint for the baron de Saint-Julien ' Les Hasards heureux de l'Escarpolette,' his first indisputable masterpiece of grace and frivolity. There was no further hesitation. He had found his chosen vocation. The baron was enchanted, and the picture was engraved by de Launay, quickly becoming the success of the hour. Before he knew it Frago's fortune was made. Wealthy fermiers généraux such as Beaujon, Bergeret de Grancourt, Rostin d'Ivry, and Randon de Boisset showered him with orders. Every one, including king and court favourite, wished something from the not over scrupulous brush which knew so well how to flatter the taste and stimulate the appetites of a society whose characteristic frailty was what Voltaire termed love weakness. Within a few busy years the young painter who had so anxiously awaited payment for his Académie picture was enjoying an annual income of forty thousand pounds.

Meanwhile it mattered little that Diderot should massacre the charmingly aerial ceiling he had sketched for Bergeret, or that Bachaumont should savagely accuse him of desiring to shine only " dans les boudoirs et les garde-robes." After the Salon of 1767 he ceased to exhibit, and grand, imposing compositions were renounced for countless exquisite revelations of nudity, often venturesome, always inviting. Though henceforth he painted mainly to please himself and his opulent patrons the marvel of it is that the quality of his work seldom suffered. Incredibly prolific, he displayed an ease and fertility almost without parallel. His art became a perfect mirror of contemporary caprice both sensuous and sentimental. Just as the baron de Saint-Julien had inspired ' Les Hasards heureux de l'Escarpolette,' so the marquis de Véri gave him the suggestion for ' Le

Verrou.' To Varanchan de Saint-Geniès went 'Les Baigneuses,' and to the rich notary, Duclos-Dufresnoy, 'La Fontaine d'Amour.' In rapid succession came 'Le Serment d'Amour,' 'Le Sacrifice de la Rose,' 'Le Début du Modèle,' and innumerable 'Billet-doux' and 'Baisers' all executed in a spirit of vivacious frankness and responsive sensibility. He proved himself amazingly varied, this eager little amoroso of the brush. The subdued dignity of 'Le Contrat' was offset by the less circumspect insinuation of 'La Gimblette' or 'La Chemise enlevée.' Moreover, he kept his impressions fresh by constant contact with the world about him. He was no frigid onlooker. Always animated, always gay, witty and insatiate, he frequented at will the coulisses of the Opéra, the chauffoir of the Comédie, or took supper "chez les sœurs Verrières." A natural, instinctive being, he was disturbed neither by the maxims of the Encyclopaedists nor the lachrymose penitence of his moralizing friend Greuze.

In an age of exteriorization, when the surface of things must perforce be in fastidious accord with the complexion of the moment, it was inevitable that the decorative arts should enjoy high esteem. Already well known through his work for Bergeret, and for the royal château de Bellevue, it was natural that Fragonard should have been among those chosen by Drouais to adorn the new pavilion being erected for Mme. du Barry at Louveciennes, overlooking the Seine near Marly. Nothing was spared in making the structure a miracle of refined allurement. Ledoux was the architect, Lecomte, Pajou, Vassé, and Allegrain contributed the sculpture, and Vernet, Hallé, Van Loo, and others the paintings. There were timepieces by Lepaute, carvings by Gouthière, and tapestries by Cozette, while from the gilded wainscoting glanced demurely Greuze's 'Cruche cassée.' It was in his series of four panels painted for this cabinet of beauty and licence that Fragonard achieved the cardinal tri-

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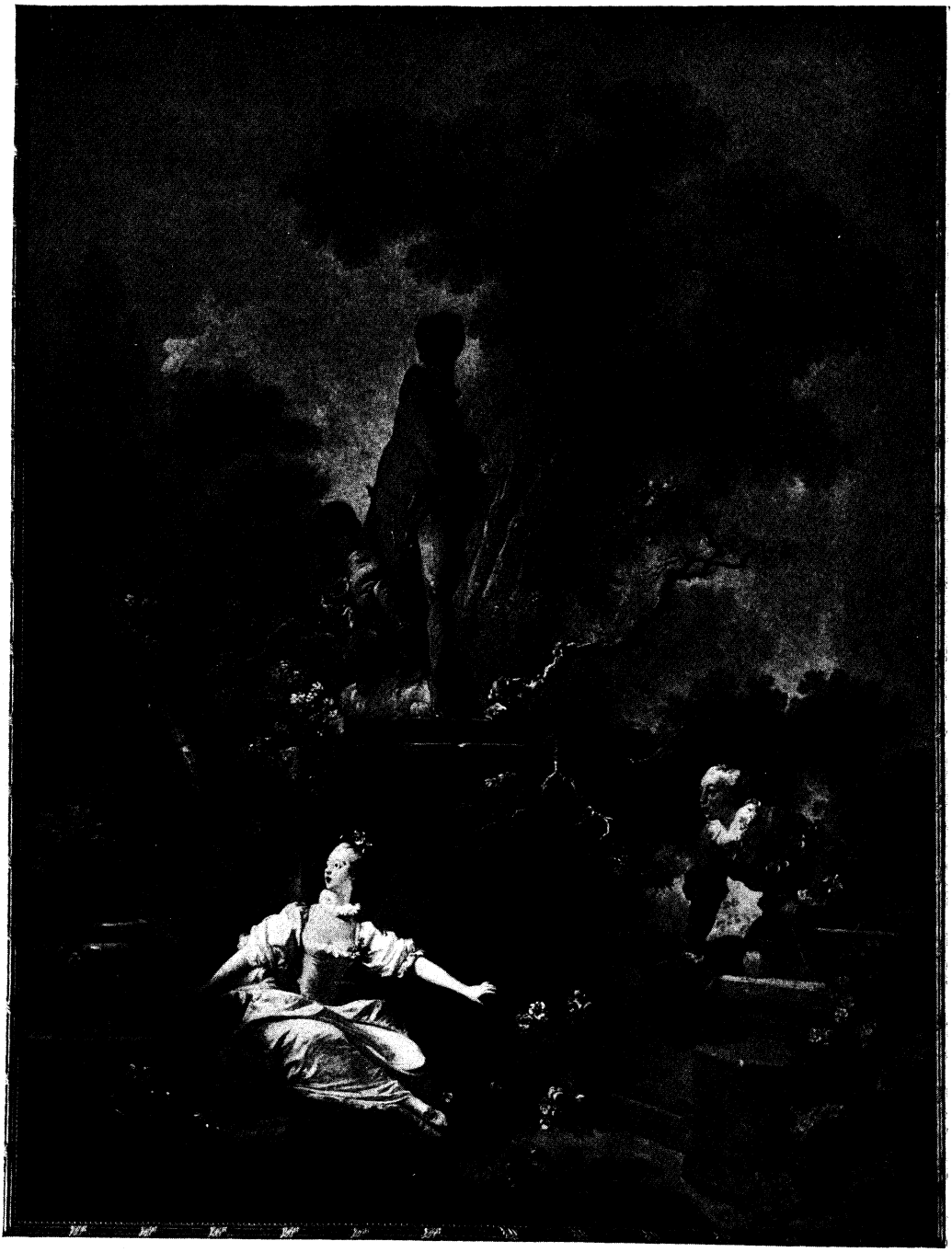


LE RENDEZ-VOUS

By Jean-Honoré Fragonard

[*Courtesy of J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq.*]

umph of his career. Conceived by the favourite herself, this 'Roman d'Amour de la Jeunesse' epitomizes in chaste and appealing accents that same Romance of Love and Youth with which Fragonard was so familiar. And yet the work, fitting as it seems, was never placed upon the walls for which it was intended. The reason was not because Mme. du Barry lacked funds, nor because Vien's lubricous classicism was deemed more appropriate, but possibly because the artist had been a shade too explicit in the matter of portraiture. It was one thing to picture the golden-haired, fresh-tinted creature from Champagne as a fancy shepherdess, but Louis le Bien-Aimé could hardly have relished being depicted as her companion. The royal sybarite doubtless refused to sanction even this faint record of his profligacy, so Fragonard's idyl, which traced in such captivating terms the love of king and courtesan, was supplanted by decorations in no way comparable to his dream of youthful fondness and frailty. It is even doubtful whether the painter received proper indemnity, though in any case he must have somewhat sadly rolled up the canvases and placed them in the corner of his studio where they remained neglected in the flush of a life crowned by success and filled with eager pleasure. The same mad craze for luxurious appointments permeated all classes of society, all save the sullen, brooding peasantry who loomed more and more ominously in the background, and whom La Bruyère alone had seen in their true light. As du Barry was employing Ledoux and Fragonard in the adornment of her pavilion, so had la Guimard secured their services in beautifying her famous "Temple de Terpsichore" in the rue de la Chaussée d'Antin. The two projects were carried forward almost simultaneously, and, oddly enough, ended in a somewhat similar manner. Annoyed, it is inferred, by his procrastination, "la belle damnée," as Marmontel none too deferentially christened her, quarrelled with the painter who promptly and

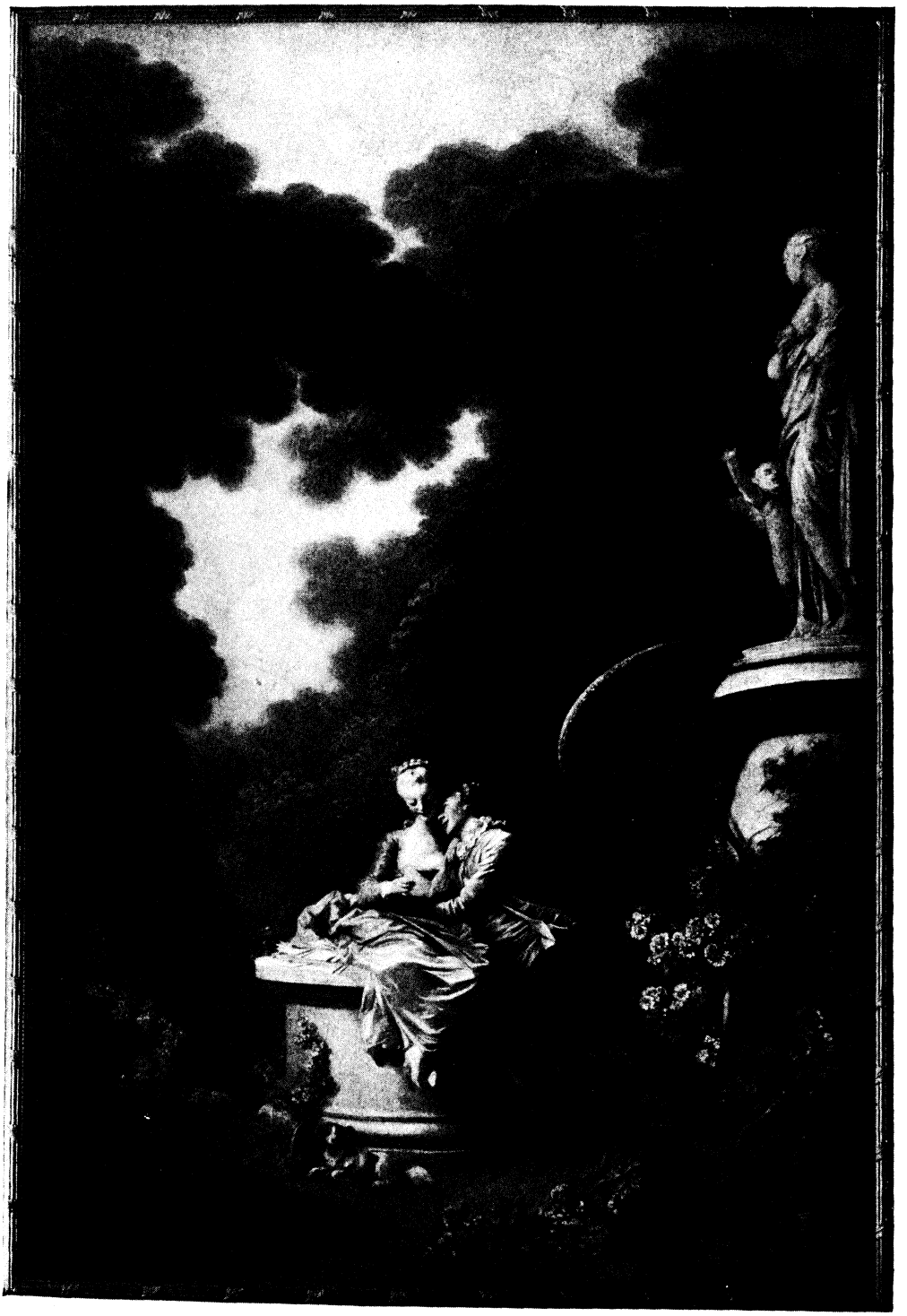
generously left the work to be finished by none other than Jacques-Louis David, then on the threshold of his stormy and triumphant career.

Weary of endless fêtes and numerous princesses of the opera or the theatre, Fragonard had meanwhile married, on 17 June 1769, at the age of thirty-seven, a simple, wholesome lass of eighteen from his native town. The wedding itself was not without its air of refreshing simplicity, having been celebrated at the church of Saint-Lambert among the green fields and winding lanes of Vaugirard, then a suburb of the capital. Possessing less style and decidedly more common sense than the Parisiennes about her, Marie-Anne Gérard, later known as " la caissière," made a prudent, though scarcely inspiring wife. The family, which was soon augmented by the arrival from Grasse of Marguerite Gérard, a younger and far prettier sister-in-law, and also by her brother, Henri Gérard, all lived comfortably together in the Galleries of the Louvre which, since the time of Henri IV, had been divided into apartments for those " excellentz maîtres," the artists. To Fragonard's quarters on the ground floor often came Hubert Robert and Saint-Non, Hall, the miniaturist, who brought his flute and his beautiful daughters Adèle and Lucie, Greuze, bilious and irascible, the Vernets, and de Launay, all delighting in " l'aimable Frago's " hospitality and the picturesque diversity of a studio containing Boulle furniture, Beauvais tapestries, a tiny fountain, a rustic swing with toylike trees dotted about, and a memorable Benvenuto vase. Save for a leisurely journey to Italy as the guest of Bergeret, rich Receveur-général, whose tastes were quite as gastronomic as they were artistic, Fragonard remained faithful to his lodgings in the Louvre and his country retreat at Petit-Bourg, near Corbeil. With the advent of his daughter Rosalie, and his son, Alexandre-Évariste, familiarly known as " Fanfan," his devotion to domestic life assumed new depth and

stability. Memories of prentice days with wise, sane Chardin seemed to drift back to him. He became almost a little Flemish master, painting with unsuspected penetration and insight such episodes as ' La Jeune Mère,' ' La Visite à la Nourrice,' ' L'Heureuse fécondité,' and ' Les Beignets.' It was an existence quite calm and equable. The wayward ' Baisers ' of former years had become ' Les Baisers maternels.' The provocative creature of ' L'Escarpolette ' had been superseded by ' Mo'sieur Fanfan ' learning to walk, or ride a hobby horse, or straddle the back of a big house dog. Not only did he imperceptibly become one of the first and greatest of intimists, he loved equally well to paint outdoor scenes. His records of peasant life are veracious and exact. They have little of the pretty deceit of their day. His shepherds are not operatic, his shepherdesses are not made of Sèvres. To everything he treated Fragonard brought the same clarity of vision, the same lightness yet surety of touch. Just as he had anticipated impressionism in his views of the Italian villas, just as in his endearing glimpses of domestic felicity he had antedated the later apostles of intimacy, so in farmyard incident or landscape he gave the art of his time fresh sincerity and significance. While Gallic in interpretation, it is manifest that certain of these inspirations came from outside his native land. If his more fanciful and pagan conceptions descend from the florid Rubens, it is equally true that his interiors often recall ter Borch or Vermeer, and his trees, meadows, and skies those of Ruisdael and Hobbema. Though it is unlikely that the busy Frago ever journeyed to the Low Countries, it is a matter of note that he was familiar with the already important collection of Dutch and Flemish canvases then in the Luxembourg. A Greek at bottom, he was gifted with unfaltering instinct for that which was articulate and expressive wherever it might be found. Despite a very human laxity in other directions, in questions of art he was concise, specific, and logical. While his feeling for

form and rhythm was clearly classic, his work was imbued with a nervous grace and daintiness wholly new. His divinities still inhabited Olympus, but it was Olympus feminized.

As the years slipped by and good Marie-Anne grew scarcely less prudent and phlegmatic, it was inevitable that her place in the household should have been in various ways filled by Marguerite Gérard, among whose attractions were a sprightly wit, a head of brown wavy hair, a pair of bright eyes, a small, slightly upturned nose, and cherry lips. More adaptable than her elder sister, who still wore her crisp white cap and spoke in the none too limpid accent of the South, Marguerite readily made her presence felt. Under the painter's inspiration she developed a slender, imitative talent, and often her " bon ami Frago " would bend over the easel adding deft touches here and there and absorbing the fragrance of a young being who soon came to embody for him " la poésie " and presumably more. Decorative painting was by no means neglected along with the multitude of tasks including illustrations for Don Quixote and La Fontaine, which date from this period. On several occasions the entire family was installed at Cassan where Fragonard was engaged in embellishing Bergeret's new villa. The summers at Cassan, and at Folie-Beaujon, found their record in quantities of sketches and larger compositions dashed off with astonishing virtuosity, many of them fugitive, impromptu glimpses of perhaps the happiest hours of the painter's life. Though the only cloud thus far had been the death of his daughter Rosalie at the age of eighteen, it was not long before the sky began to darken fatefully. The States-General had met in May 1789, and already catch phrases of freedom and progress were penetrating the studios. Although largely supported by the crown, the artists of the Louvre were republican in birth and sympathies and were easily swept along by the rising hurricane of liberal enthusiasm. In September of the same year the names of Mme. Fragonard and Marguerite



LA LETTRE D'AMOUR

By Jean-Honoré Fragonard

[*Courtesy of J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq.*]

Gérard as well as those of Mmes. Moitte, David, Suvée, and Vien figured among the list of citoyennes who offered to the Assembly their tribute of rings, bracelets, and jewels of every description for the national defence. Within a few feverish months all were plunged into the greatest social convulsion the world has ever witnessed. The change was cruelly sudden. Before anyone could realize it the Reign of Rococo had given way to the Reign of Terror.

Fragonard, lacking the aggressive temperament of David and his circle, was completely bewildered. There seemed nothing he could do. His wealthy protectors were seeking safer quarters, and surly, red-capped mobs, maddened by the lust of blood, thronged the streets and squares. Arrests were being made on every side. Hubert Robert was flung into Saint-Lazare and Hall was forced to flee the country, while from his windows the anxious little painter daily saw groups of sansculottes drag the " mauvais riches " off to prison or the guillotine. Shaken in spirit and filled with dismay by the scenes of horror which constantly met his eye, it was not strange that " le petit papa Fragonard," as they had come to call him, should often have thought of bright, serene Grasse. Taking with him his long neglected panels he one day slipped away to the South, finding, with his cousins the Mauberts, a grateful welcome. Here at Grasse he passed considerable time, and it was here, in the secluded, cypress-screened house of his kind host that the ' Roman d'Amour de la Jeunesse ' found at last its true setting, a setting more enduring than it would ever have known at Louveciennes.

In the large salon on the lower floor, with its windows looking out upon the garden where pomegranates, orange trees, purple hollyhocks, and great masses of geraniums shimmered in the sunlight, Fragonard completed, harmonized, and fused into single effective unit his immortal love pastoral. In size and general arrangement the room was admirably suited to receive

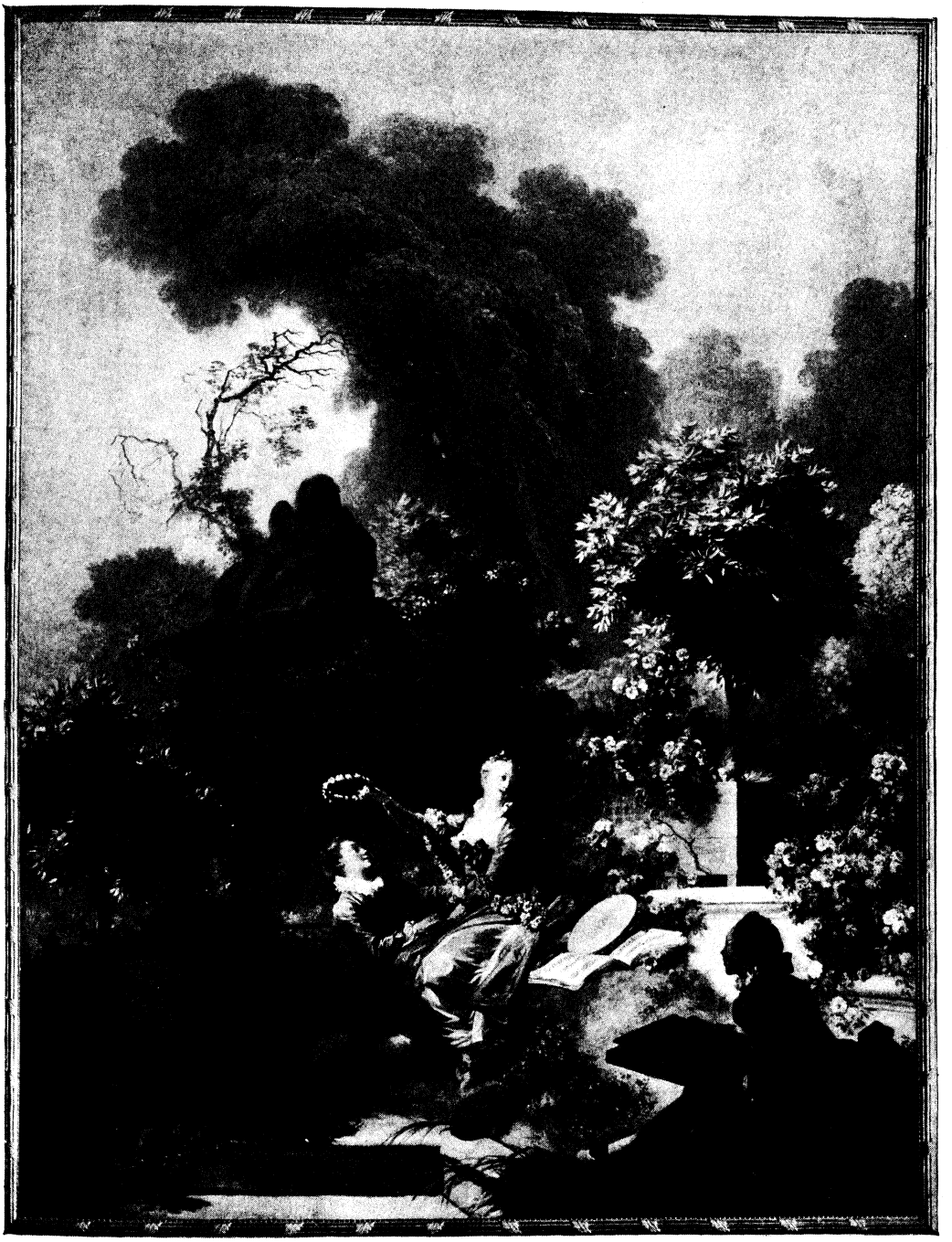
the four subjects already finished, and to these he added a fifth, painted four dessus de porte, a panel above the mantelpiece, and four connecting shafts. Although opinions vary, the logical order of the series is obviously:—'La Poursuite,' 'Le Rendez-vous,' 'La Lettre d'Amour,' 'L'Amant couronné,' and 'L'Abandon.' Nothing in the art of Fragonard or the art of his contemporaries quite approaches the persuasive charm of this Romance of Love and Youth. Not only is the narrative carried along with just the proper note of precision in the larger panels, it is also suggested with playful symbolism in the minor compositions. It is Paradise and Earth, a blissful Paradise with a chubby deity chasing doves about in midair, and a smiling Earth, profusely flowered and peopled by a young couple whose every movement is cadenced by the pulse of love. The gallant who offers the emblematic rose, who climbs the terrace where the chosen one awaits him, who is by turns ardent and triumphant, is beyond question Louis XV minus nearly half a century of self-indulgence. His Bourbon profile grows less exact after the first and second panels, but in them it is unmistakable. The slender blonde who accepts his suit with such studied artlessness, such inviting reserve, is of course Mme. du Barry whose white throat was soon to be severed by the guillotine. In the fourth scene, 'L'Amant couronné,' it is permissible to infer that the youthful artist who has been called upon to immortalize their happiness is none other than Fragonard himself whose dark curls and clear cut features are also visible in 'L'Armoire' and other canvases. It was an age of touching sensibility as well as avid pleasure, and in the last panel Fragonard shows his dainty shepherdess musing ruefully alone at the foot of a marble column which is surmounted by a mocking and admonishing cupid. The loved one has departed, the flowers have withered, and over the park has settled the chill of autumn tinging all things with subdued fatality. Each of the groups is delicately

varied as to colour and disposition. Blossoms become brighter and costumes more vivid as the climax is approached and diminish in intensity toward the end, the final episode being almost a monochrome in russet brown. Fluent, audacious dexterity of handling is everywhere apparent. Silks of blush-pink, mauve, amber-yellow, or pale blue vie in richness with abounding clusters of bloom. All the resources of an iridescent palette have been called into play throwing into just sufficient relief the expressive pantomime of the figures. The whole spirit of the story is imbued with discreet restraint as well as luxuriant radiance. It is poetized longing. It is passion made lyrical.

For over a century Fragonard's Romance of Love and Youth remained quite as he had left it in this silent room with its Beauvais tapestries, gilt consoles, couches, and tabourets—this room so filled with the fragrance of past, faded elegance. It was not, in fact, until 8 February 1898, that the paintings left the possession of M. Malvilan, a grandson of the artist's cousin, M. Maubert, on which date they were sold at Cannes, bringing 1,250,000 francs. During the autumn of the same year they were exhibited in London, and were subsequently purchased by Mr. J. Pierpont Morgan. Yet not all of Fragonard's sojourn at Grasse was spent in dreaming anew with mingled joy and pathos dreams of former, happier days. Faithful as he was to his own treasured kingdom of grace and beauty, he did not wholly escape the troubled issues of the hour. Echoes of the storm penetrated the farthest corners of la Provence, and, moreover, the sanguinary Maximin Isnard was his neighbour. If tradition may be accepted it was the little exile himself who, in an outburst of patriotism, painted the heads of Robespierre and abbé Grégoire together with the emblems of law and liberty such as the Phrygian bonnet, axes, and fasces which ornament the stairway of his host's house. In any event it is consoling to know that though things were going so badly with his friends in

Paris, the artist's visit did not prove altogether fruitless, as is shown by a receipt recently discovered in the Maison Malvilan which reads:—" J'ay reçu de mon cher cousin Maubert, pour ouvrages de peinture, la somme de trois mille six cent livres, dont quittance jusqu'à ce jour, pour solde de tout compte, à Grasse, ce dix mars 1791. Fragonard, peintre du Roy."

Returning to the capital on the morrow of the September Massacres, Fragonard found the situation even worse than when he had left. The passion for blood had not been slaked and the Paris which greeted him was not the Paris he had once known. The streets still swarmed with drunken soldiers, beggars, thieves, and wild-eyed hags. Saint-Non was dead and there were few who recognized the tiny fellow with short white locks, flowing grey mantle, and loosely knotted scarf who dodged about in search of some friend who might drop him a word of welcome. The very soul of things had altered. Financiers and nymphs of the Opéra were scattered. The Loves and Graces had departed, and Beauty had been stamped under foot. Idle gallants no longer danced minuets or tinkled lutes under the protecting trees. Instead, hot headed fellows mounted rostra and harangued the populace in the name of liberty and equality. The insinuating songs of de La Borde were drowned by the majestic roar of the Marseillaise and art was called upon not to please or flatter but to flame and to inspire. The blatant Graeco-Romanism of David was in the ascendant, " Fanfan " was rapidly becoming Alexandre-Évariste Fragonard, equally distinguished and equally monotonous as painter or sculptor, and Marguerite Gérard was exhibiting at the Société des Arts vapid, feeble reminiscences which could hardly have brought her master either pride or joy. All seemed strange and hopeless. Cherubino was forgotten. He belonged to another and a brighter world. Moreover, the brushes had lost their magic. There remained on the palette no glittering dust from invisible



L'AMANT COURONNÉ

By Jean-Honoré Fragonard

[*Courtesy of J. Pierpont Morgan, Esq.*]

Mail

butterfly wings. There is no telling what might have befallen the distraught and unhappy painter had it not been for the all-powerful David, who, though relentless to so many others, never forgot the kindness Fragonard had shown him years before. On David's recommendation he was made a member of the Jury des Arts and later Président du Conservatoire du Muséum. He even figured with Lesueur in the place of honour at the planting of a Tree of Liberty in the Court of the Louvre, and by an ironical turn of fortune was detailed to make inventories of some of the same luxurious private hotels he had once helped to decorate. The temper as well as the taste of those about him was visibly turning against all that Fragonard and his art represented. He courageously tried in two or three empty, ambitious canvases to adjust himself to the manner of David, but his heart was not in the work. So little were his own family in sympathy with the traditions he still cherished that one day Alexandre-Évariste consigned to the flames a number of sketches and prints by his father, exclaiming, with pride, " Je fais un holocauste au bon goût! " The hand which had once painted in a single hour the fluent, virile portrait of M. de La Bretèche shortly became weak and faltering, and the income, formerly so ample, dwindled to almost nothing. At one period Mme. Fragonard was even forced to beg at the butcher and bake shops of the quarter. Before long Vivant-Denon not only removed him from his post with the Muséum but soon suppressed his pension as well. They were bitter months for one who had hitherto tasted naught save success and happiness. In distress he turned to Marguerite Gérard who replied with daintily phrased platitudes counselling him to practise forethought and economy. He had showered upon her an infinity of affection and inspiration. All she had for him in his hour of darkness was egotism and discreet advice.

On his return from the South Fragonard had again taken up residence in the Louvre where he had lived since the day the

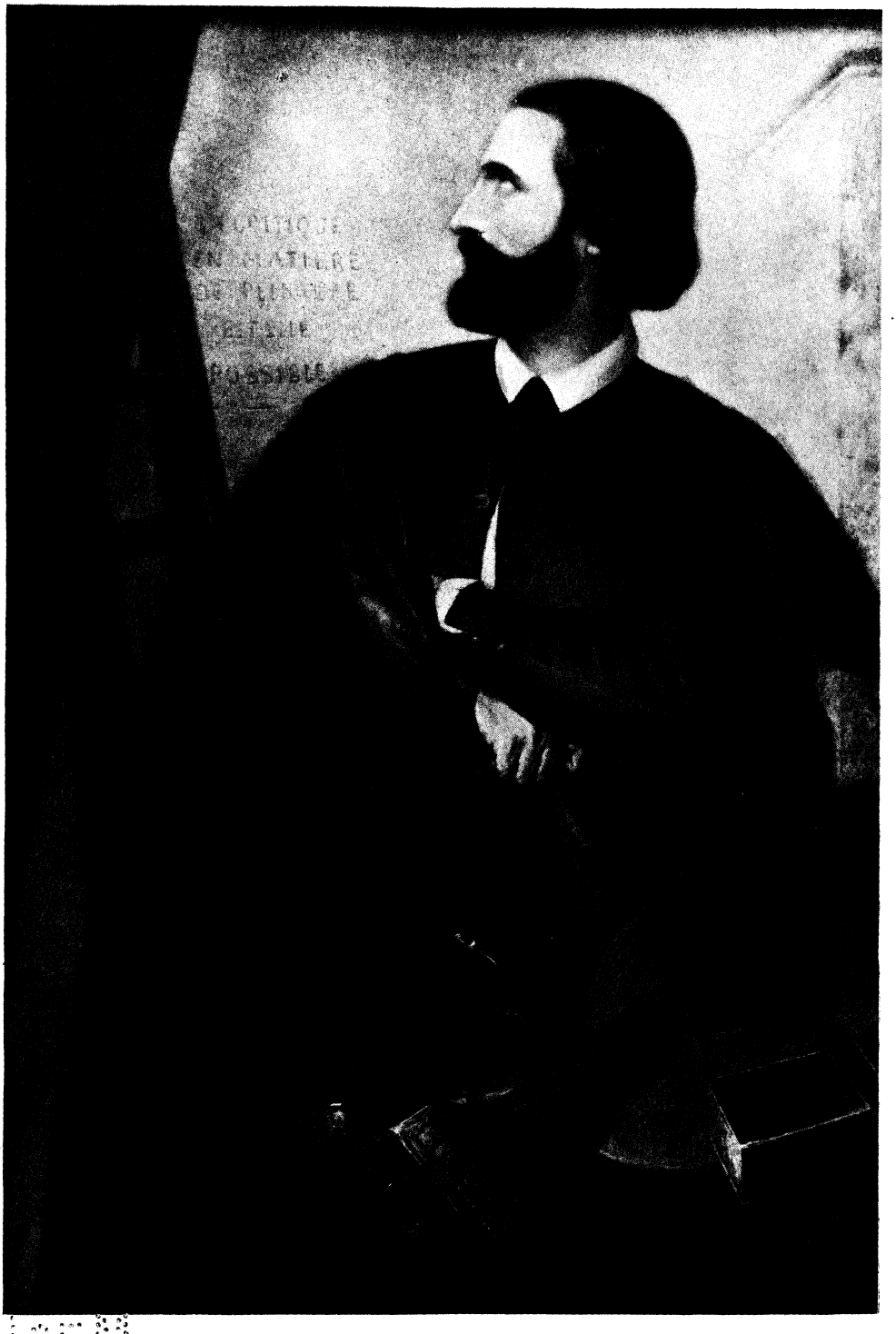
young pensioner of the king had proudly become painter to the king. As though his trials and disappointments were not already enough, he was compelled to submit to another, and still greater humiliation, for one night Napoleon, riding by with Duroc and seeing a few modest lights gleaming from the windows of the Galleries, ordered the " immediate evacuation " of the place, fearing that a chance fire might imperil paintings and statuary sacked from every corner of Europe. Not wishing to be away from his beloved Louvre, Fragonard moved across to the rue de Grenelle-Saint-Honoré, lodging with a restaurant keeper named Véri, in the Palais-du-Tribunat, now the Palais-Royal. Feeling himself isolated he virtually gave up work, and being active despite his years, spent the time pattering about the streets and gardens ruefully noting changes which were fast destroying the ancient aspect of the town. On certain of these wanderings he doubtless happened upon stray engravings by de Launay or Beauvarlet of canvases which he must have recalled with confused, pathetic rapture; though on the whole, there was little to remind him of a vanished and discredited Arcady. One afternoon on returning from the Champ-de-Mars tired and feverish he entered Véri's and called for an ice. It brought on cerebral congestion, and by five on the morning of 22 August 1806, he was dead.

His entire life save those few troubled years toward the last had been itself a ' Roman d'Amour de la Jeunesse,' expressed in continuous variants on the blues, whites, and reds of his own luminous Grasse. Though he touched with flexible ease many themes, love was his favourite theme—love which he pressed into the petals of a rose, a rose worn now at the breast, now offered in mystic, virgin sacrifice, now lying crushed upon the floor. For a decade or more before the end came the art which he practised with such infectious enthusiasm had been a thing of the past, yet he lingered on a solitary, pathetic reminder of those

pleasure loving days when his fame had seemed so secure. The reign of aristocracy was indeed over. Republican aggression and imperial authority were the successive watchwords of David, who at intervals laid aside his Roman toga to picture with trenchant power the leaders of this vast movement for the emancipation of the human spirit. It was inevitable that the Journal de Paris and the Moniteur de l'Empire should scarcely mention the passing of Fragonard, and that the lightness, truth, and impromptu freedom of his art should find scant favour at the dawn of so stressful and grandiose an era. In his own elusive, unpretentious way he represented the principal movements, artistic, social, and intellectual of his age. A modernized Athenian, he learned from Boucher and Tiepolo the secrets of decorative composition. Through Chardin, Watteau, and especially Rubens, he enriched France with the fruitful Flemish tradition, while there are in several of his more serious and aspiring canvases hints of that classic revival which followed the discoveries at Pompeii and Herculaneum. Typifying in many respects the frivolous hedonism of Crébillon, Laclos, and Mme. d'Épinay, he nevertheless echoed at moments the scepticism of Voltaire and the return to nature so explicitly preached by Rousseau. Yet above all else he was a poet, not a mere versifier, a painter pure and simple, not a philosopher or a rhetorician. Whatever his task, he always managed to illumine and adorn it. He gave to eroticism new mystery; he etherealized feeling just as he volatilized colour. Personally as well as artistically he is directly allied to the chief modern school, that of the Impressionists, his great-granddaughter having been the beautiful and gifted Mme. Berthe Morizot, wife of Eugène Manet. If he has to-day regained his rightful position, if his memory has been appropriately honoured at Grasse, Besançon, Nice, and Paris, it is because in him is recognized not only the fitting epitome of his time but a painter who must always remain youthful and

rich in inspiration. His colouring still retains its freshness and its bloom. Not a single one of his roses has faded, nor can ever fade. And neither the ceaseless tramp of armies nor a century of neglect has been able to obliterate this expressive, spontaneous art—this art which is both epilogue and prologue, which in tender, gracious accents bids adieu to the old regime and salutes the coming of the new.

ANTOINE WIERTZ



ANTOINE WIERTZ

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

[*Wiertz Museum, Brussels*]

ANTOINE WIERTZ

IT was not until years after the passing of the pale captain who had come up from Corsica and had changed for awhile the map of Europe, and so profoundly the destiny of man, that art resumed her true course of development. Rigid and invincible, the resurrected heroes of Greece and Rome continued to stalk before the eyes of an enthralled populace. Not satisfied with having formalized the art of his own country, David, like some conqueror of old, crossed over into Belgium and encased Flemish painting in the casques, breastplates, and stiff draperies of bygone ages. The period was one of slavish subserviency or stormy, ineffectual revolt. Oscillating between the dominant influence of a single powerful tradition and the gradual awakening of social consciousness, the painters of these arid days reflected little save restlessness and uncertainty. All were in a more or less degree victims of the impending transition from precedent to personal liberty, from established authority to the sovereign rights of the individual. The most acute embodiment of this ferment of the human spirit, this fever-dream which followed the blood letting of the Napoleonic era was Antoine Wiertz. It is less as an artist that this singular figure challenges attention than as the man who best typifies that nightmare which preceded the dawn of rationalism and democracy. With scant exception it has been customary to consider this extraordinary being as a mere freak or madman in no way influenced by current conditions, or as one whose work possesses

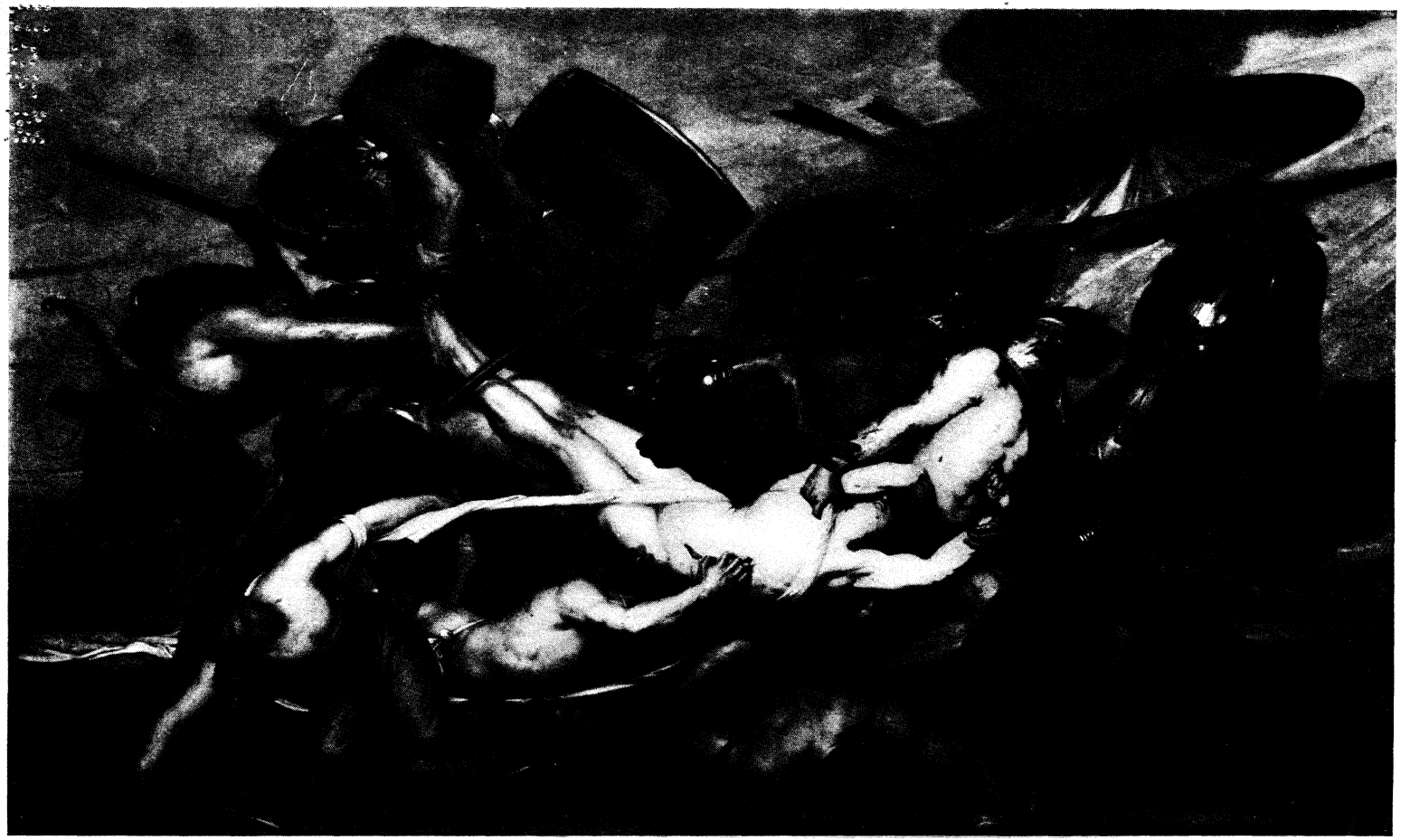
little interest beyond that of eccentricity. Unbalanced Wiertz certainly was, and incontestably lacking from an artistic point of view, yet on his vast canvases are pictured as nowhere else the death agonies of Antiquity and the crude vehemence of the modern world. The man's entire existence was an unceasing struggle to attain self-adjustment. He was torn asunder by conflicting and incompatible ideals. Possessing what he fancied was veritable Promethean fire, he was jeered at by his contemporaries. Hounded out of classic precincts, he took hold of actual issues only to be maligned and misunderstood. Through the sheer power of abnormality he nevertheless managed to force himself into the company of the great, unforgettable masters of his own and former times. He was not a Rubens or a Michelangelo as he supposed, yet by measuring himself against such giants during years of frenzied endeavour he has succeeded in being remembered along with them. Ambition, however colossal, is an insufficient asset, but when that ambition is expressed in transcendent manifestations of misguided genius the result is apt to be formidable. It is impossible to gaze upon Wiertz's tortured canvases or trace the story of his titanic and forlorn life struggle without falling under the spell of an abounding individuality. He seizes upon you like some fatal obsession conjuring up visions hideous or imploring. Involuntarily you believe that there must lurk somewhere within the man and his work a baffled beauty, a sublimity which, by the merest mischance, became grotesque pretence or tragic incompletion.

In surveying the field of art it is by no means obligatory to choose only the stereotyped products of organized effort, only those names which have been hallowed by general approval. The lesson of failure is quite as significant as the lesson of success, and in the case of Antoine Wiertz the failure was complete enough to serve any conceivable purpose. With this angry, turbulent spirit you enter at a bound that vague realm,

half aesthetic, half speculative, which has lured countless ardent souls to their destruction—that province where thought so often triumphs over taste, where the idea and the image are constantly at war. A child of the great Revolution and an eye witness of the valiant uprising in which Belgium won her independence, Wiertz's nature was unalterably militant. It was in the quiet town of Dinant, on the Meuse, bordering the leafy recesses of the forest of Ardennes, that this strange victim of aspiration and fatality first saw light on 22 February 1806. Antoine Wiertz was the only son of Louis-François Wiertz, a soldier of the Grande République, and Catherine Disière, a daughter of the people. His father, though a native of Rocroy, was of Saxon origin, and in his mother's veins flowed the blood of the sturdy and industrious Walloons. In the boy's earliest attempts, in his first recorded sayings, and through his troubled career, it is impossible not to realize that he was an outcome of that stirring, sanguinary idealism which since 1789 had been sweeping all before it. After four years' campaigning Louis-François Wiertz retired, wounded, to the hospital of Louvain, later resuming civil life in the modest capacity of a tailor. On the fall of the Empire he entered the local gendarmerie, and though he never rose beyond the rank of a simple brigadier, he was gifted with a noble and virile soul and exercised a profound influence over his son's development. Aside from a consuming passion for universal success and renown he instilled into the boy's heart two notable qualities—a stoical indifference to mortal ills and an abiding contempt for material reward. Yet it was of fame which the old soldier oftenest spoke, and quite logically the father's love of martial glory became with the son an unquenchable thirst for artistic achievement. "My brushes," he would exclaim, "are my lances, a canvas is my battle-field." While it is true that he lost most of his battles, the idea of strife, of conquest, never

forsook him. It pursued him during all those bitter, agonizing years, and when, on that mellow June night in Brussels he was compelled to accept his final defeat, the struggle was heartrending in its fruitless intensity.

From the outset there appears to have been no question concerning the lad's future calling. Playing one day beside his mother, who was seated at her spinning-wheel, he suddenly announced that he wished to be a king. "Why?" asked the good dame, thinking his mind must be fixed upon the shock of war or the splendour of regal pageantry. "So that I might become a great painter," the boy replied. At the age of four he drew with astonishing ability, colouring his productions with the juice of berries, and by ten was painting portraits. A little later he carved out of wood a frog which was so lifelike that visitors would try to make it hop about, and which, on one occasion, a swaggering captain of gendarmes even attempted to impale on the point of his sword. The art of engraving he also mastered, or rather rediscovered, and so locally famous had he become by twelve, that the proprietor of a popular inn at Ciney commissioned him to execute a sign for his hostelry which was known as the "Cheval noir." Although the youthful aspirant had never before handled oil colours he was so successful that honest folk who flocked to the celebrated fairs of Ciney predicted that he would one day become the foremost sign painter of the town. It was about this period that M. Paul de Maibe, patron of art and member of the States-General, hearing of the boy's uncommon talents, sent him to school at his own expense, afterward securing from the king the slender pension which enabled him to continue his artistic studies. Dinant naturally offered scant facilities for advanced instruction, and, moreover, the lad was nightly visited by the luminous apparition of a tall figure wrapped in a flowing mantle and wearing a huge Spanish hat. Its manner was imperious and in its hands was borne aloft a



THE GREEKS AND TROJANS CONTENDING FOR THE BODY OF PATROCLUS

By Antoine Wiertz

[*Wiertz Museum, Brussels*]

banner whereon gleamed in letters of fire the word "ANVERS." Young Wiertz never for an instant doubted that it was the spirit of Rubens beckoning him to Antwerp, and, already convinced of his high destiny, to Antwerp he forthwith proceeded.

Possessing naught save his pension of one hundred florins a year the young enthusiast desired little beyond "bread, colours and sunlight," though often he was forced to do without all three. He worked assiduously at the Academy under Herreyns and Van Brée, occupying a miserable attic room too low for him to stand upright in and almost too short to accommodate him when lying down. Though only fifteen he was tall and fully developed physically, having the stature of a grown man, his pale, chiselled features being covered with a luxuriant black beard. In his shabby cell was neither stove nor fireplace, and through the battered casement or openings in the roof used to blow at will bitter winds or puffs of snow. The room was a chaotic jumble of books, papers, anatomical studies, musical instruments, and the varied paraphernalia necessary to the practice of sculpture, painting, and engraving. At times it grew so cold that the zealous student was forced to take to his bed, and more than once fell asleep with crayon in one hand and scalpel in the other. It was a gruesome retreat. Against the bare wall dangled a skeleton, and opposite the door grinned a cleverly painted death's head. Few visitors ever crossed the threshold, for Wiertz was regarded as an eccentric, and between himself and the world was already erecting an impregnable barrier. His fellow-pupils openly sneered at the strange recluse of the rue du Pont-Saint-Bernard whose gods were Rubens, Michelangelo, Homer, and Corneille, and whose only goddess was Glory. He never married, and while still a student took vows of chastity, invincibly schooling himself against every distraction, every seduction. A phenomenally gifted musician, he played numerous instruments,

and when it grew too dark to work would thus divert his fancy, while below on the street passers-by would pause and listen to the wild, haunting strains floating on the midnight air. Although he lived for years in utter poverty, he did so mainly from a matter of principle. Beyond a few hastily executed portraits which he refused to sign, he never made the slightest attempt to sell his work, preferring to have it always by him for purposes of alteration and correction. A wealthy connoisseur once called and offered an excellent figure for a certain sketch. "Keep your gold," cried Wiertz, closing the door in the intruder's face, "it is death to the artist!"

In 1828 the young Dinantais competed unsuccessfully for the Prix de Rome. It was a cruel blow to his hopes, and a still ruder shock to his overmastering pride. Undaunted, he next repaired to Paris, where he was so poor that often, instead of dining, his only expedient was to draw his belt a bit tighter about the waist in order to lessen the inconvenient void. He had hoped to subsist by painting portraits, but not finding sitters at any price hung out a sign reading "Portraits Gratis." As though to enforce the irony of fate, no one condescended to come even on such flattering terms. Four years later he again entered the academic lists, this time carrying off first honours. All the soaring ambition so long held in check at once flared forth in radiant anticipation. In an ecstatic letter to his cousin and patron, Gilain Disière, a sturdy, kindly boatman of the Meuse, Wiertz grandiloquently announced that "the path of glory" lay open to him. The Antwerp officials gave a reception in his honour, and on his departure for Rome via Paris, the townsfolk of Dinant strewed the streets with flowers, fired complimentary salutes, and entertained their young genius in the Council Chamber of the Hôtel-de-Ville. No wonder after years of anguish and obscurity, of fevered, mocking dreams in the pitiful mansards of Antwerp and Paris, the marble-browed visionary's

head was completely turned. Small wonder that when, in the summer of 1834, he entered Rome by the Porta del Popolo to the accompaniment of a crashing thunderstorm, he complacently regarded the incident as being heaven's recognition of his arrival on the threshold of the Caesars.

The same unrelaxing austerity, the same unflinching devotion to what he conceived were the supreme manifestations of artistic expression, and that same burning desire for glory which had characterized his student days continued to torment Antoine Wiertz during his sojourn in Rome. He worked incessantly, succumbing to no such disturbing passions as those which assailed poor Léopold Robert. Under the aegis of Michelangelo and Homer a species of heroic, audacious frenzy took possession of his soul. At the time he was planning his huge canvas depicting the ' Greeks and Trojans Contending for the Body of Patroclus ' he wrote as follows to his devoted but amazed boatman cousin, Gilain Disière; " I am all impatience to begin; I would have my arms ready at hand. My brush strokes will be furious and terrible, like the lance thrusts of the Greek heroes. I shall defy the greatest colourists; I shall measure myself against Rubens and Michelangelo! " The Vatican and the Sistine Chapel had a momentous influence over him just as Notre-Dame in Antwerp had, when, a mere lad, he stood motionless before the Flemish master's ' Descent from the Cross.' All the while he was making studies for, and actually painting his ' Patroclus,' Wiertz was inflamed with the ardour of conflict, more than once exclaiming, " I imagine, like Alexander the Great, that the eyes of the universe are fixed upon me! " Within six months the composition was finished and exhibited at the Academy of Saint Luke in the presence of over a thousand enthusiastic artists. Thorvaldsen, greatly impressed, said: " This young man is a giant."

Yet the reception accorded ' Patroclus ' in Rome was not to

be duplicated elsewhere. When the canvas finally reached the port of Antwerp, consigned of course to the Academy, that unperturbed institution declined to pay the five hundred francs carriage, and, had it not been for the generous assistance of Van Brée, it is difficult to conjecture what might have been its fate. Pending its formal exhibition at Antwerp, Wiertz placed his picture on private view in the ancient convent of the Récollets, and there he sat almost alone day after day playing the guitar and confidently awaiting his hour of triumph. Fired by the lust of conquest he meanwhile decided to throw down the gauntlet to his mortal enemy, Paris, but unfortunately the big canvas arrived at the forbidding portals of the Louvre too late for the Salon of 1838. Wiertz, in Homeric rage, demanded its admittance, or, failing of that, permission to erect a tent and publicly display his masterpiece in the place du Louvre. As both requests were everywhere suavely yet firmly refused, there was nothing to do but wait a year longer. The following season he sent ' Patroclus ' and three other subjects, including an ' Entombment,' painted at Liège, a work which he assured his friends marked the opening of his " duel with Rubens, of which Paris will be the witness; his duel with Paris, in which Rubens will be his second." Unhappily the " hideous monster," Paris, which he threatened to crush under his heel, that " cancer," or, as he often called it, that " city of suicide," declined to bow to the magic of his brushes and palette. The jury accepted three of his contributions but skied them all cruelly, ' Patroclus,' though hung in the Salle d'honneur, being barely distinguishable. Wiertz, cut to the quick, waited moodily about for a few weeks seeking retribution, then left forever the scene of his pain and humiliation. Press and public had alike ignored him. It was a blow from which he never recovered, and from thenceforth dark shadows of hatred and revenge began to gather closer and closer about him. He planned numerous retaliatory meas-

THE REVOLT OF HELL AGAINST HEAVEN

By Antoine Wiertz

[*Wiertz Museum, Brussels*]

ures, and the succeeding year actually had the ironical satisfaction of seeing a similar " immortal jury " decline an admirable canvas by Rubens, which he had borrowed for the occasion, and to which, in the presence of witnesses, he had affixed his own signature.

The verdict of Paris was in large measure sustained when ' Patroclus ' was placed on exhibition in Antwerp and in Brussels. While a few of the critics praised it, most of them were openly hostile. Classic themes were fast vanishing before the rise of a vigorous national school under the leadership of Wappers, and the first hints of that new, poignant actuality of which Charles de Groux was to become the apostle and Constantin Meunier the chief exponent. Wiertz felt out of consonance with his age, and in order to justify and defend his position, began with brush and pencil a campaign of bitter, indignant rebellion which only ended with the grave. He resided at Liège during this period in order to be near his widowed mother for whom his devotion was unbounded. ' Esmeralda ' and ' Quasimodo ' were the immediate results of his visit to Paris and his admiration for the Hugoesque. Other subjects followed in lightning succession, the most important being the ' Revolt of Hell ' which he painted under the cupola of the church of Saint-André. He worked with incredible energy, covering in six weeks this colossal canvas measuring fifty feet high by thirty feet wide, with masses of writhing demons and avalanches of riven rock. " I know neither day, nor hour, nor date," he wrote at the time. " I know but two things, the moment of labour, and the moment of repose." Occasionally in the evening he might be seen, tense, abstracted, yet full of filial solicitude, strolling along the quai de la Souvenière arm in arm with his tottering mother, soon, alas, to be taken from him. Her death drove him to Brussels where, housed in an abandoned factory, he completed the ' Triumph of Christ,' in many respects his most rational and con-

sistent production. It was this effort which induced the government, through the intermediary of M. Rogier, to build him a suitable studio on condition that upon his death he should leave all his works in perpetuity to the State. And thus by the spring of 1850 his restless, sombre probation was over. He had found at last those great bare walls he had dreamed of as a child, and which he might now cover as an ever encroaching spirit world saw fit to dictate.

The interval between his return from Rome and his establishment in what later became the Musée Wiertz marked the creation of the painter's most important classical and biblical works. Those which followed were mainly of a pseudo-philosophical character, or else sheer, unredeemed studies in terror and grotesquerie. Beset by all save a slender handful of believers Wiertz made matters worse by rushing into print at every opportunity. While a few able, though extravagant effusions, among them a ' Eulogy of Rubens,' which was crowned by the Antwerp Academy, flowed from his vehement pen, for the most part his writings were charged with exalted egotism and majestic presumption. The critics were the particular objects of his wrath. He could never forget them, and even said that if they pressed about him after death " like a flock of vultures " picking his fame to pieces he would surely rise from the grave and defend himself. The inspiring events of 1830 which had so quickened Belgian national feeling found ready response in Wiertz. Political revolution he firmly believed should be followed by artistic revolution. In an open letter to the Minister of the Interior in which he offered to the State a picture of his own on condition that it be hung beside Rubens's ' Descent from the Cross ' in the cathedral of Antwerp, he says:—" It is time we threw off this foreign yoke; it is time we had confidence in our native forces. Let us cease to believe with the French that M. Delacroix is a greater man than Rubens, and that M. Decamps

is a worthy rival of Raphael. It is time, in short, for our Belgian artists to sing their Marseillaise!" And yet all the while this resplendent prophet was crying aloud to the world in lofty tones, all the while he was crowding his vast canvases with distraught and pleading conceptions, he was enduring the most dire poverty and neglect. He painted as always for posterity, refusing to part with any picture of importance, a foreign prince once vainly offering an immense sum for the 'Triumph of Christ.' It was often with him a case of "bread or lead," though somehow just enough bread always came to save him from that oblivion which he dreaded above all else. The image of death haunted him with increasing vividness as the years slipped by, not as something to be feared in itself, but as the messenger who might summon him hence before glory should be definitely assured.

Under his explicit instructions and in exact replica of the ruined temple of Neptune at Paestum the State agreed to erect for him a permanent studio situated near the Parc Léopold and not far from the Garde du Luxembourg. The building is to-day surrounded by the melancholy charm of a small, neglected garden, and though gloomy, is reposeful in aspect, somewhat suggesting a mausoleum. About the massive columns, over the broken pediment, and along the rough walls have for years twined masses of creeper and ivy, now green, now purple or crimson. Though certain exterior features have altered, within the place remains much the same as during the painter's lifetime. It is a pictorial pandemonium, a vatican of eccentricity. On the walls rages a cyclopean conflict between good and evil, between beauty and horror. The majestic and the trivial are grouped side by side just as they burst from their creator's disordered, incongruous fancy. Visions of seething, relentless power are offset by cheap devices and panoptical tricks unworthy of the rudimentary imagination of a child. Sentiment of the

sugary, Bouguereau brand is succeeded by dramatic vivisections and insistent diablerie from which the most callous visitor shrinks in loathing and disgust. All periods from the classic to the ultra modern and morbid, all episodes from the ' Education of the Virgin ' to the ' Romance Reader ' throng this lurid graphic cosmos. Apart from the pictures he had previously painted it took the artist just fifteen years to fill the remaining space at his disposal. A portion of the time was passed in writing his ' Flemish School of Painting ' and numerous brochures, pamphlets, and tractates as well as in modelling, for sculpture was also one of his passions. During many anxious, baffling months he devoted his energies to the study of chemistry with a view to perfecting his " peinture mate," a combination of fresco and oil painting supposedly having more fluency of handling than the former and none of the latter's often irritating reflective quality. It was of course necessary for him to continue fabricating portraits " pour la soupe," as he would say, and during less exalted moments he perpetrated various " petites bamboches," or serio-comic platitudes without interest or distinction. He insisted upon living a rigidly isolated existence, seldom venturing out, though adjoining his studio he devised a miniature " jardin géographique," in which, arrayed in long black tunic, big Rubens hat, and gaiters, he used to promenade, fancying himself in different parts of the universe. He laboured ceaselessly, it being his hope some day to enlarge the museum to many times its actual size and paint a continuous panorama of civilization, of which the portion already completed was but the preface. Yet this grandiose dream was not to be realized. Death, who had long since gazed fixedly upon him from the walls of his narrow Antwerp mansard, at last claimed him for that dim kingdom which is all dreams, all phantoms.

He suffered intolerably from neuralgia, and moreover his chemical researches had undermined an otherwise robust con-

A SCENE IN HELL

By Antoine Wiertz

[*Wiertz Museum, Brussels*]

stitution. Though ill but a few days he died in fearful agony from gangrene shortly after ten o'clock on the evening of 18 June 1865, the fiftieth anniversary of the battle of Waterloo. Even as the mortal chill was creeping over him he moaned frantically "I am burning! burning!" At the bedside had gathered Dr. Watteau, Louis Labarre, his lifelong friend and champion, Mme. Sébert, and the eldest son of the good boatman, Galain Disière. It was a soft, magical summer night. Overhead swung a silvery moon and from the near-by gardens were wafted the strains of a waltz. He grew calmer after awhile and spoke of Socrates's belief in the immortality of the soul, and then, realizing that his time was at hand, fought off the inevitable moment with agonizing fortitude. Just before the end he raised himself upon the pillow and cried: "Oh what glorious horizons! What beautiful, tender countenances! how sad they are; they weep because they love me so. Quick! My brushes! My palette! What a picture I shall paint! I shall vanquish Raphael!" Then, speechless, he raised his hand and with his finger traced imaginary outlines in the air, sinking back with an inexpressible sob of regret. They buried him temporarily in the cemetery of Ixelles, conducting the heart to his native town of Dinant to repose in an urn in the Hôtel-de-Ville, where, years before, he had been proclaimed the godson of Rubens, the saviour of the art of his country.

It is useless to pretend that the work of Antoine Wiertz possesses any special aesthetic value or significance. He occupies a decidedly rickety seat in the Pantheon of the masters. He entered not by day, between wide, lofty portals, but on a stormy night through the back door and up dingy, crooked stairs. Though at the outset he may have had some hint of the plastic fervour of Michelangelo, some gleam of the chromatic fulgor of his revered Rubens, such gifts were quickly engulfed in a boundless ocean of personal vanity, and vaunting, arrogant emula-

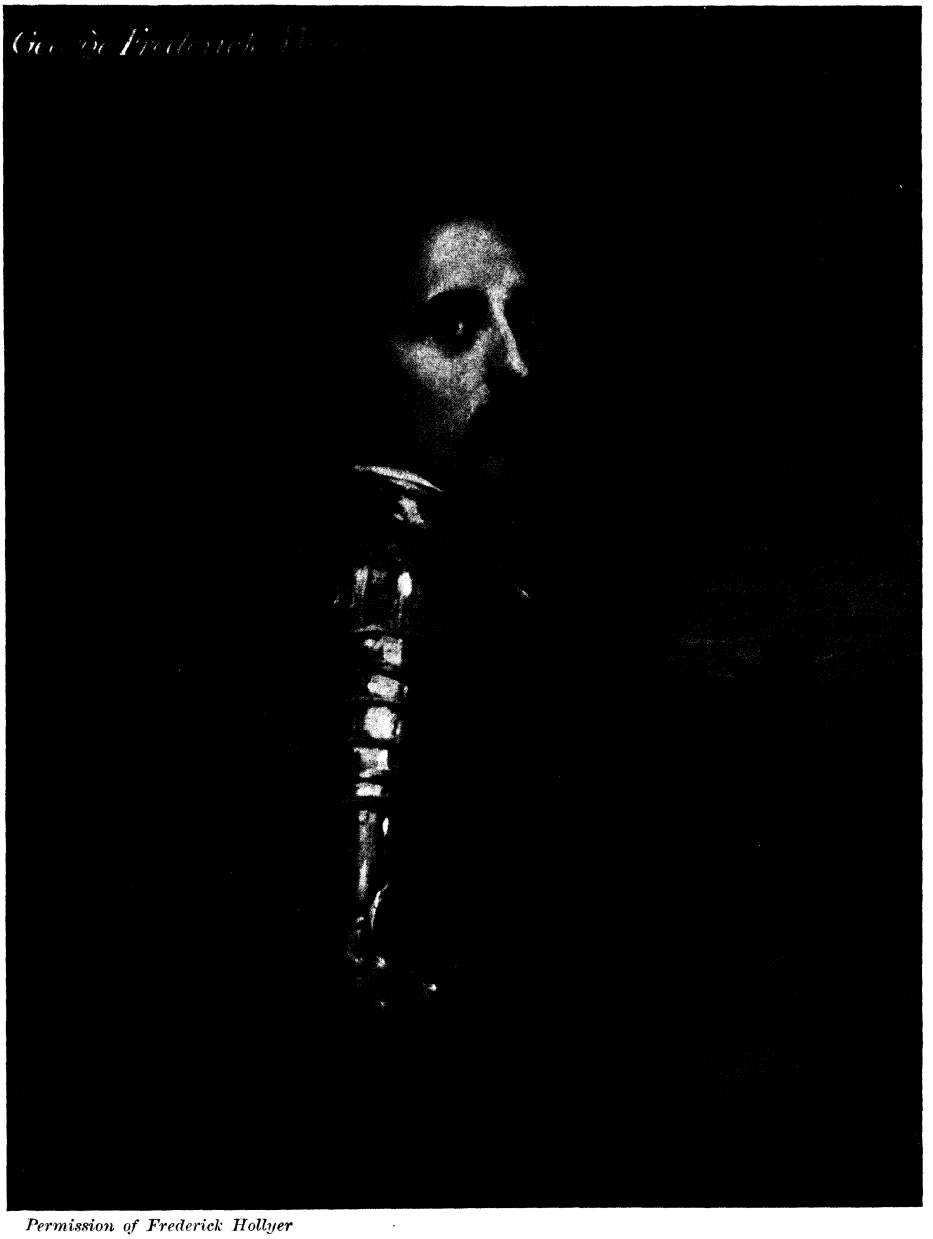
tion. A flash of the spiritual evocation of Blake here and there shines forth only to be rendered dull and lustreless by the heavy pomposity of Haydon. The man came too late upon the scene. He stirred up the dust of giants long since departed. He summoned from the spacious, heroic past stalwart figures who merely mocked him and glided back into the abyss of eternity. At no time does he appear to have possessed a clear perception of reality. His dreams early began to dethrone thought, and finally reason. He was utterly lacking in all sense of relation or proportion. Size was to him synonymous with greatness. His art is extensive rather than intensive. The fundamental defect of his nature seems to have been a disastrous form of egomania. He was continually substituting ambition for accomplishment; he was forever confounding glory and self-glorification. Not the least of his shortcomings is that he was a perpetual borrower. His special divinities he often placed under contribution, and, still unsatisfied, he did not scruple to look elsewhere. Upon 'Happy Times' has settled the Hellenic quietude of Poussin. Back of 'Two Young Women or the Beautiful Rosine' looms the eloquent and occasionally voluptuous fantasy of Delacroix. Each stage of his development is reflected in these violent, abortive productions. In 'Patroclus' he challenges the universe; the 'Revolt of Hell' depicts his own revolt against those in power, and in the 'Triumph of Christ' are mirrored the few brief moments of peace he was ever to experience. Nevertheless this art is not only typical of the man himself, but in a distorted way of the nation as well. While individual, this turbulence, this morbid unrest, were also general. Other of Wiertz's contemporaries thought and felt much as he, and numerous Belgian artists both past and present have fallen under the same spell. There is something of Wiertz in Laermans, in the pallid figments of Khnopff, and the sardonic demons of Félicien Rops, while young Henry de Groux is clearly

his artistic grandchild. Above and before them all, however, towers the mighty, fecund genius who has given the world that series of ' Last Judgments ' and cataclysmic ' Revolts ' now in the Munich Pinakothek. More than anyone else Wiertz resembles Rubens—a Rubens bereft of health, bereft of mind.

It is in the last phase of his activity that Wiertz exhibits most sympathy with the particular tendencies of his race and his time. While in his classic and biblical subjects he seldom speaks with his own voice, in a series of crudely powerful social studies he strikes a far deeper note. ' Orphans,' ' Premature Burial,' ' Hunger, Madness, and Crime,' ' The Last Cannon,' and ' Thoughts and Visions of a Severed Head,' each preaches a sermon with but scant attempt at disguising the text, one pleading for charity, one for cremation, one against poverty, one against war, and another against capital punishment. He was ever haunted by vague souvenirs of the days when the armies of the Republic and the Empire so seared and scarred the face of Europe, and in a ' Scene in Hell ' does not hesitate to depict a certain familiar figure with long cloak, cocked hat, and folded arms standing unmoved amid livid flames, whilst about him surges an infuriated, lamenting crowd of widows and orphans, bearing in upraised hands the dismembered remains of their slaughtered loved ones. In these and similar episodes Wiertz proves himself a true son of democracy and humanitarianism, as well as one of the first artists to treat modern themes on an imposing scale. It is obvious that more restraint and less crapulous horror, less of the stench of the charnel house would have heightened the efficacy of these appeals, and yet at times the man's brain seemed itself a veritable morgue. To the last Wiertz fancied himself a soldier of advanced thought, a " chasseur d'idées." One of his favourite projects was the establishment of a series of exact correspondences between the various arts, a theory to which Goethe and others had already given no

little consideration. In distorted measure he possessed the mind of a philosopher, the imagination of a poet, and the fervour of a patriot. Endowed with acute organic susceptibility he appeared destined from the first for martyrdom. He was born, and persisted in continuing, tragically out of harmony with the world about him. He lived the life of a lost Titan, always alone, always harassed. His unflinching devotion to his career and his austere vows of poverty and celibacy—vows which were never forsworn—did not, in the end, suffice to constitute him one of the gods or redeemers of art. Through reasons beyond control of his troubled spirit he could not remain upon the heights. He descended perforce from Olympus into the recesses of dark Avernus.

GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS



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GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

[*Possession of Lord Ilchester, Holland House, London*]

GEORGE FREDERICK WATTS

LONG since, a youth of eighteen with sensitive features, a brow crowned by dark curls, and eyes that spoke of high enthusiasms dreamed an exalted, resplendent dream. He dreamed of a gleaming Temple of Life with vast corridors and stately chambers. The temple was built of marble and its walls were covered with frescoes depicting in epic sequence the august mysteries of birth, of life, and of death. Grouped about were statues giving form to those ideas better suited to plastic expression. Each crisis in the upward struggle of the soul and the surge of each elemental passion there found fitting semblance. The themes were treated in allegorical vein and in terms which would appeal to mankind for all time. That which is, and that which is not, that which has been, and that which can never be—the entire pageant of hope, and effort, and aspiration was unfolded in symbolic beauty and significance. Inevitably this fervid, soaring conception was never realized, for the cosmic history of humanity can hardly be written by a single individual. Only a little wall-space has been covered, only a few bits of statuary have been put in place, a few faces limned with unfaltering serenity, yet enough exists to witness the depth and vitality of that early revelation. Though feeble of body the dreamer remained ardent in endeavour, and never ceased striving for the fulfilment of his youthful vision. Until the very last he continued adding to a task which from the first must perforce have remained unfinished.

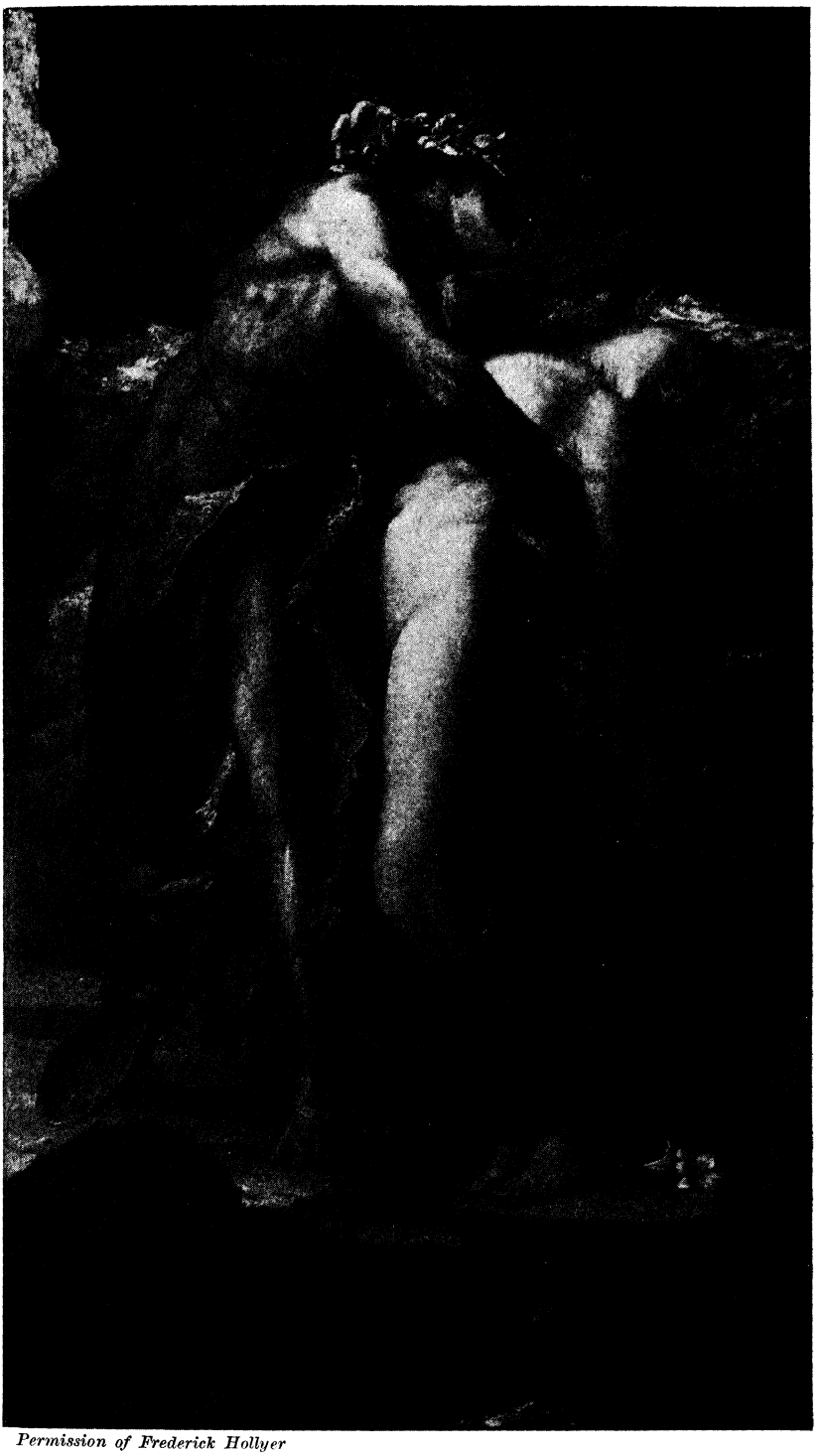
Only in England during the nineteenth century could such a phenomenon as George Frederick Watts have occurred. He belongs to the Victorian age, to an age of liberalism, of humanitarian aims, and a certain broad, didactic habit of mind. In artistic as well as political progress his countrymen had been the leaders of the modern movement. A century and more before the place de la Concorde was dyed crimson, England had passed through a corresponding crisis and was already laying the foundations of a well ordered social and economic system. The same results were achieved as in France, but by vastly different and less violent means. The very moral stability of the people made it impossible for them to drench their country in blood and tears. Moreover, there were no traditions to hamper development; the iron hand of classicism did not reach across the Channel. Society was less highly crystallized and the varied activities of the human mind were more natural, more healthy, and more spontaneous. By the time Watts was born in London on 23 February 1817, the intellectual atmosphere about him was clear and serene. He grew to manhood amid settled, equable surroundings, and since throughout his career there seemed little to do beyond improving and uplifting existing conditions, it was fitting that he should have become an idealist. In common with his contemporaries in the field of letters or of science he dedicated his gifts to the cause of humanity. For close upon ninety years he gazed at life with the eyes of the spirit, seeing only that which the spirit saw, recording only that which to the spirit seemed worthy of record. Though this steadfast visionary often turned to actuality in order to enforce or verify an impression, always, with him, did the symbol transcend the fact, always did the unseen shine more radiantly than the seen. Fundamentally moral, it was the impress of an ethical rather than a physical beauty which he sought to transcribe. Since art was for him a sacred mission rather than a disturbing riot of the

senses, that which he strove to portray was the austere serenity or the purifying anguish of the soul. In depicting what he conceived to be inspiring and eternal truths he never hesitated to sublimate colour and contour as well as passion and volition. While his colleagues were for the most part painters only, he was both painter and prophet. His work was everywhere illumined by imaginative reason. He saw in all things the image of divinity. God was for him the world and the world was God.

Almost any time until the last four years might have been seen seated before the fire at Little Holland House in his favourite red plush arm-chair or strolling about the garden of Limnerslease in skull-cap and workman's blouse this venerable, benign figure. Those who knew him intimately called him "The Signor," and in many respects his patriarchal appearance suggested some bygone Venetian senator. To certain minds he was but a kindly, dignified echo of past grandeur and faded glory. There seemed, it is true, a pathetic incongruity between the outward frailty of the man and his unquenchable earnestness of purpose. Furthermore, he was the ceaseless victim of doubt and mistrust. He habitually underrated his powers and often referred to himself as "the poorest of poor creatures." While it is obvious that he must often have been taken at his own measure, those who understood George Frederick Watts were never deceived. Though his greatness was not at first apparent, it was nevertheless indubitable. A delicate, sickly child and a man who suffered throughout life, he still managed to keep burning the flame of high hope and far reaching ambition. Through infinite care he maintained a finely adjusted equilibrium of forces which lasted until the end. With unflinching persistence he outlived long periods of indifference and obscurity, drifting at length into the serenity of general recognition and acceptance. From the deepening twilight of the heroic age of art

looms this solitary being. In pious ecstasy he recalls the Hebrew seers; for tragic awe he may be likened to Aeschylus. In devotion to form he suggests Phidias, and in tone the richness of the Renaissance. While he possessed none of these qualities in generous measure, each was in some degree his legacy, and each in part transfused every canvas, every bit of bronze or marble he has left behind.

In the truest sense of the phrase this meek yet mighty spirit seemed to inherit the earth. His majestic roll of years gave him ample perspective, his open, inquiring mind moved freely among the varied works of God and man, and his vision embraced all periods and all epochs from the awakening possibilities of creation to the clouded hour of our own day and generation. Beyond everything he was a supreme pictorial genius. Even when he failed, as he often did, to clothe his ideas in finite guise, the effort exacts attention and respect, for the man's calibre is also manifest in his groping, incomplete gestures. He was essentially a creator. Whatever he touched sprang into predestined form and colour. Out of chaos he made a vast panorama of primitive potentialities; he retold with new depth and pregnance Greek legend and Arthurian romance, and over the troubled destiny of mankind shed a flood of consoling light. Above all he was simple and elemental. The sea, the sky, the gleam of flesh, and the far stars were the alphabet of his art. From the primal dust and wind, from the diffused radiance of the first sunrise he fashioned creatures tender and ethereal, prophetic and courageous. Although the art of George Frederick Watts gathers under her protecting wings so many of the earth's children and the children of the brain, there is no lack of unity, or of community, in anything he painted or modelled. A single thought animates his entire graphic cosmos. His message is the message of universal brotherhood and universal peace. Leaving to divers youngsters the sterile doctrine of art



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ORPHEUS AND EURYDICE

By George Frederick Watts

[*Possession of Mrs. Beers, London*]

for art's sake, he boldly proclaimed that beauty was the heritage of the many, not the property of the esoteric few. Art, he held, should in her highest manifestations be consciously utilitarian, should be a medium for the transmission of ennobling ideas. "A picture without an idea," he said, "is like a face without eyes." He went still further. "A great picture," he maintained, "must be ethical—didactic, if you like, but certainly ethical. Humanity has created art, as it has created tools and weapons, for its own advancement, for its own help, for its own comfort." Had he possessed a mind less clear and logical, and a less exacting aesthetic conscience, it is easy to see how this evangelist in paint must have encountered complete shipwreck. Yet that same gift of balance which so long held body and soul together also kept in sufficient accord the thought and its expression. However instinct these canvases are with mental or moral purport, they but seldom fail to reveal a compensating external loveliness. Spirit and sense have here been strangely, almost mystically, married.

It is a frequent contention that the art of Watts is literary, meaning, presumably, that it contains elements which properly belong to the domain of letters. Few judgments could be more superficial or inadequate. The conceptions that took shape under the caressing stress of his brush or chisel are not the exclusive property of any sect or coterie; they are the common legacy of all men and all ages. They are those fundamental verities which have perplexed or inspired humanity from the beginning and will continue to do so until the end. They occupy alike the painter and the poet, the theologue and the man of science, the sybarite and the beggar by the roadside. In scarcely a single instance has Watts repeated either in substance or in form that which had been said before. What he did was to take certain typical themes and recast them in a language of his own. When at his best he embodied in splendid, sweeping lines and

solemn, glowing colours the eternal aspiration and the eternal heart-hunger of the human race, the joy of service and the pain of those who, having great possessions, depart in sorrow. It was no narrow view that he took of his mission. "Art," he held, "embraces the whole of those conditions which are to be represented to the mind through the medium of the eye." Himself a rigorous, elemental man he gave to certain of these truths a clarity and a structural simplicity which made them universal in application and appeal. When he speaks in his rightful voice it is impossible to remain deaf to the message of Watts. Full of subdued rhythmic vibrancy, his canvases seem like pictorial anthems. One and all they chant the Gloria in Excelsis of life and art.

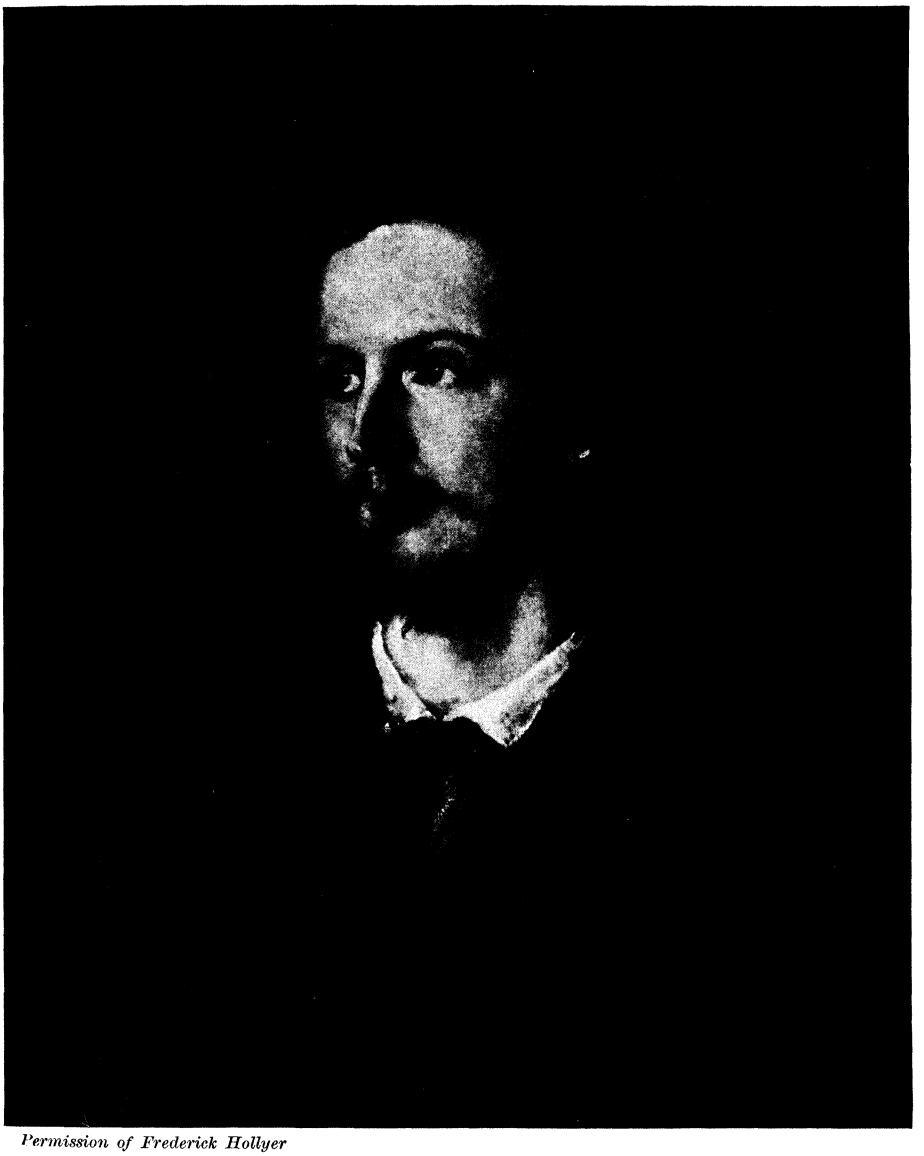
While he acquired much from without, while he took gladness from the vernal freshness of spring, or tinged his palette with the burning glow of the dying year; while he borrowed the veiled whiteness of the pearl and the pink of the nautilus, the drifting vapours of the river and the iris of the rainbow, Watts's chief storehouse lay within. It must not be assumed that this man with his imaginative fervour, with that power of recreation so doubly his, represents a wholly British endowment. The keynote to his character and his achievement lies in the fact that he was a Celt, not a Saxon. His father was of Welsh extraction, and from him doubtless came the sustained poetic impulse, the kiss of fire, and the benediction of tears, that suffuse all Watts touched. Into his landscapes stole unconsciously that pale light which gleams behind the mist-wrapped hills of Wales. Imbued with all the wistful yearning of his race, and with an abiding sense of the futility of earthly things, he managed to establish a definite and fruitful relation between the past and the present. Musing in his peaceful Surrey home his fancy travelled to vague, dim times, to dark forests and the sea crashing on a lonely coast. At nightfall as he moved about the gar-

den, white-bearded and clad in flowing blouse, he seemed almost an ancient Druid watching the flame from some rude pyre mount skyward in slender, fitful spirals. And out of this realm half creative and half reminiscent emerged at intervals stalwart men and ardent, heroic women. ' Britomart ' and ' Uldra,' ' Una ' and ' Brynhildr,' each came to him awakening echoes of an earlier, more mystical existence. The trace of the Celt was seldom absent. ' Eve Repentant ' might have been a distraught Isolde, and the broken lyre in the tremulous fingers of ' Hope ' a harp once belonging to some wandering bard. While several of his inspirations were superficially Spenserian, in point of fact they went still further back—back, indeed, to days before those restless seekers pushed westward, clinging, finally, to the last fringes of land facing the Atlantic. There is something not only Celtic but Asiatic in the art of Watts. It is Oriental symbolism seen through the grey fogs of Britain.

Every episode in a career inwardly rich though outwardly placid helped Watts to formulate his cherished conceptions. The four years passed in Florence under the patronage of Lord and Lady Holland, and the months spent among the islands of the Aegean or the plains of Asia Minor with the Newton expedition, added warmth and definition to his maturing vision. The hours consumed while studying the Elgin Marbles in the British Museum likewise contributed their particular quota. A student at the Academy Schools for but a few weeks, and a desultory pupil of the sculptor, Behnes, Watts was without systematic training. " I never had any master save Phidias," he often said, and this was literally true. Victorian in its breadth and philanthropy, the art of Watts is eclectic, for he wandered over a wide field in his endeavour to restore painting to her early grandeur and prestige. In a measure his sense of form is Florentine, and his colour Venetian, yet in no pronounced degree is either the case. The tombs of Halicarnassus and the tower of

Giotto loom vaguely, though only vaguely, against his varied graphic background. While there are traces of the sweep of the Panathenaic procession, or the subdued glow of Giorgione, everywhere can be seen the resolute desire to speak an independent aesthetic language. So strongly did the creative impulse surge within that he was incapable of making copies after the Italian masters he so revered. Though Titian, Tintoretto, and especially Orcagna meant much to him it was only in a general way. He was above all a painter of processes, one who recorded the ever changing vesture of outward things, one who mirrored the mind's ceaseless inquietude. To him nothing was explicit, nothing final; decay followed fast upon growth and death was succeeded by joyous rebirth. A whole cycle of mutations both visible and invisible was continually unfolding itself before him. The world was ever new; the heart of man ever young.

The painter-knight who, at Lord Holland's mask ball, arrayed himself in a suit of silver-black armour, and whose earnest countenance is here framed by a dark casement with, beyond, glimpses of the Palazzo Vecchio, was always an instinctive, searching student of human physiognomy. When, on his return from Florence, he failed in his efforts to revive mural painting on an heroic scale, he turned to portraiture, gradually forming the idea of leaving to the nation a complete gallery of the poets, artists, publicists, and statesmen of nineteenth-century England. In all his portraits Watts aimed to see beneath mere accidents of circumstance. Each interpretation displays a humble and passionate integrity of purpose. This shrinking, modest man to whom money was naught and fame almost an intrusion, refused to exhibit himself in place of his sitter. He declined to pounce with a cheap show of analysis upon what appeared to be a dominant emotion or a characteristic trait. He was at all times content to remain questing and expectant, merging his



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ALGERNON CHARLES SWINBURNE

By George Frederick Watts

[*Watts Picture Gallery, Compton Lane, Surrey*]

own identity into that of his subject. No technical bravado mars the simplicity of these likenesses. Serene, pontifical Tennyson, irate, rebellious Carlyle, and grandly optimistic Browning look out of canvases that are devoid of any striving after points. It was the deeper mystery of personality, the unconscious revelation of self and of soul which Watts strove to perpetuate. None is without interest, none without penetration. The lyric intensity of Swinburne, the blended humour and sadness of Leslie Stephen, and the brain weariness written on the brow and in the eyes of the poet of ' Obermann ' are the acme of synthetic divination. Obviously these portraits are translations rather than transcriptions, for that which Watts aimed to achieve was something higher and nobler than pyrotechnics in paint or photographic accuracy. Taking the elements of the individual before him he recreated upon canvas his inner, rather than his outer, image, retaining those qualities which alone were essential and enduring. He remained always the idealist. He showed with gentle forbearance what man is, and with quickening enthusiasm what man should be.

The principle Watts applied with such convincing power to the delineation of his fellow-workers in the field of social advancement was applied alike to primal fancy, Mosaic tradition, Cretan myth, or medieval story. He managed to revive with a magic all his own the centuries-old narratives of the Genesis, the Fall, and the Flood. To the grief of Ariadne seated on the wooded shores of Naxos waiting the return of Theseus he added fresh poignancy. The Orpheus of legend is less tragic than the sweet singer who here clasps in his arms the already lifeless form of Eurydice, and it is not simply Diana, but the very spirit of nocturnal mystery which here bends to kiss the sleeping shepherd of Latmos. The lines of Dante carry but a faint suggestion of the listless, burned-out ecstasy of this Paolo and Francesca circling remorsefully through the Inferno, nor

has poet been able to picture a knight quite like Watts's Sir Galahad standing beside his cream-white steed, his eyes aglow with mingled rapture and resolve. If it be true that there is no beauty without some strangeness, it is equally true that there is no beauty without a certain sadness, and both elements are ever present in the work of Watts. A delicate veil shrouds each countenance, an indefinable pathos envelops hill and valley, and shadows fall aslant the path of peace. Even in the spring-time of life and love, flowers droop and heads are bowed. It is not that these beautiful, sedate compositions breathe hopeless-ness or despair; it is merely that they teach the dual lesson of courage and compassion.

Yet the real ethical and aesthetic import of Watts's message is not manifest until you emerge from the realm of fable and romance into the pale, serene atmosphere of abstract thought. The central figure in this drama of ideas is of course man. As the painter himself said: "The noblest symbol is the human form, and the human form can express all the virtues of life—love, courage, faith; and all the tragedy of life—sin, suffering, and death." Considering the manifest difficulty in treating such themes it is remarkable that this prophet in paint did not more frequently allow moral considerations to outweigh his sense of form, colour, or design, for with him the ethical purpose was ever uppermost. In point of fact, however, he was less didactic than he imagined. "I teach great truths," he once remarked, "but I do not dogmatize." Or again, speaking of the public, he said: "I lead them to the church door, and then they can go in and see God in their own way." In a series of visions sometimes inchoate and obscure, sometimes incomparably direct and uplifting, he thus sought to embody the perennial enigmas and aspirations of humankind. Although in essence they are deeply philosophical and deeply religious, these works are unconditioned by creed or doctrine. Basic ideas are ex-

pressed in the broadest, most liberal terms. The customary insignia of the church are absent. Cross, crown, and bleeding heart find no place in this grandly simple imagery. It is a grey, somewhat formless region where there are no firmly postulated texts, no fanatical sacrifices to faith. Over this art is spread the complex pathos of modern agnosticism. His pictures show, as Watts himself recognized, humanity's breaking away from theological formulae and still holding true to the law of its being—morality.

Just as he had formerly read new mystery and magic into oft-told tales, so Watts gave new shape to certain conceptions which had long been the property of the multitude. Hope never before showed such resigned and unwearied tenderness as does this bowed creature clinging to the bare disk of the world listening to the music of a solitary string, nor was Time ever before pictured as a resolute youth, clear-eyed and firm of carriage. The man's creative impulse seldom flagged, nor was he ever satisfied with conventional expedients. With steadfast gaze this calm apostle of allegory surveyed the universe afresh and in the seclusion of his studio redreamed the dreams of the ages. The most moving of all his visitants was Death, who appeared before him not in the guise of a hideous, leering skull, but as a majestic, resistless presence clad in pearl-white, her face averted, as though deploring her dread errand. Now she carried in the folds of her robe blossoms plucked but yesterday; now she crowned the brow of Innocence, and now brushed aside Love who sought to stay her hand upon the flower-strewn threshold of Life. There is always in these pictures a suggestion of maternity in the treatment of death. It was not accidental, but intentional. "I want," the painter said, "to destroy the notion that death is 'the king of terrors.' My favourite thought recognizes Death as the kind nurse who says: 'Now then, children, you must go to bed, and wake up in the

morning.' " On another occasion he spoke of her as " a gracious Mother, calling her children home."

Despite the cloud shadows that flit across this fair land, it is always springtime, always April, in the art of Watts. An inherent primalism clung about the wondrous old man even to the end. Born in the morning of the year, he somehow never lost the capacity for re-creation and the response to new life and new possibilities. Until the very last he was fond of painting such subjects as ' Green Summer,' or fair-tinted ' Lillian ' bearing in her hands a basket of fresh-plucked roses. Particularly fond of the golden crocus, he seldom failed to introduce into his paintings an appropriate floral symbolism. And like flowers his thoughts themselves would grow into being, unfolding gradually, according to some inner, hidden law, from bulb to blossom. Though by no means an exact or painstaking student of natural forms his spirit was ever in consonance with nature's meaning and nature's moods. His sympathies were attuned to the world and all that throbbed therein. His soul was at peace with God and man. In his calm, harmonious way he represented the great oneness of the universe.

There was never, in the daily life of Watts, any conflict between aspiration and accomplishment. The ideals enunciated in his art were upheld by his actions. He was not one who preached charity and failed to put his hand into his own pocket. Year after year he gave of his best with no thought of reward. When he returned from Italy convinced of the immense educative value of mural painting he offered to decorate without charge the Hall of the new Euston Station only to have his proposal rejected by the phlegmatic directors of the company. Aside from an insignificant legacy he never had a penny he did not earn, and yet presented canvas after canvas to the nation. A whole succession of contemporary likenesses was given to the National Portrait Gallery, while many of his most important

allegorical compositions went to the Tate Gallery. The cartoon of ' Sir Galahad ' he gave to Eton College Chapel, ' Love and Death ' to the city of Manchester, ' Fata Morgana ' to Leicester, a version of ' Love and Life ' to America, and ' The Happy Warrior ' to Munich. Judging by the price offered privately for ' Love and Death,' which was five thousand pounds, he might have made large sums, yet he preferred to live modestly, even plainly, with barely enough for his meagre needs. Although evincing generous sympathy for the artists of his time, and sharing to a certain degree their struggles and triumphs, he never allied himself with any particular group or movement. A Pre-Raphaelite he cannot be called, and the only possible label which may be given one so remote and so hieratic is that of having belonged to those New Idealists who have offset the rigours of naturalism and the prismatic conquests of the Impressionists by pouring over the world a tender, melting beauty —a beauty which is of the spirit rather than of the senses, of the mind rather than the eye. Decade after decade he wrought in silence and semi-obscurity, and it was not until he had reached the age of fifty that he was made a member of the Royal Academy. Yet such matters concerned him little, for later on, when twice offered a baronetcy, he each time declined, caring nothing for worldly distinction.

Like Michelangelo this humbler, more pacific giant of the English Renaissance had within him a persistent love for the round. At intervals he busied himself with sculpture, the bust of ' Clytie,' the statue of ' Hugo Lupus ' which commands the entrance to the grounds of Eton Hall, and the heroic equestrian entitled ' Physical Energy ' which was appropriately designed to stand upon the heights of Matoppos in commemoration of the achievements of Cecil Rhodes, being his chief contributions to plastic art. For many years he lived in Little Holland House, Melbury Road, where his friends often gathered to see his work

and listen to grave dissertations on current topics or delight in his playful, almost boyish, banter. He used to wear the proverbial crimson skull-cap and blue blouse, and when animated would move his head sharply from side to side making short, impatient sweeps of the arm. At times, though, he would remain seated for days the prey of nervous depression or a curious "brain sickness," as he called it, which made it impossible for him to visit the studio wherein were gathered so many canvases completed or in process. A Stoic in cast of mind, he was a Spartan in his tastes and habits. He never smoked, never touched alcohol in any form, and ate sparingly. Avoiding as a rule public gatherings, he was fond of strolling about the streets arrayed in a long fur coat. And every night for years, at the close of a hard day's work, he would sit down to a supper of cold pudding, milk, and barley water.

The life in London was carried out in brighter, more inspiriting colours at the painter's country home known as Limnerslease, in Surrey, near Guildford. Guarded by tall sentinel firs the modest, vine-grown house looked across a landscape dotted with white cottages set among smiling fields. In his younger days Watts was a capital horseman and might often have been seen galloping up "Hog's Back" or along the very road where Chaucer's Pilgrims used to wend their way toward the shrine of St. Thomas at Canterbury. Throughout the summer and autumn he rose every morning at three thirty, worked until seven, when he had his bath and breakfast, then worked until one, and again from three until six or after. Unhurried, undisturbed, he would labour at different periods for ten, or even twenty years upon the same composition, getting closer and closer to the idea which he sought to portray. Though his technique was troubled and fumbling, he somehow managed to achieve the desired results, and when all was finished would cover the canvas with a film of white, afterward adding fresh

Permission of Frederick Hollyer

LOVE AND LIFE

By George Frederick Watts

[*The National Gallery of British Art, London*]

touches of colour in order to get just that bloom which indeed is the bloom of eternal youth. A few of his pictures, such as the fire-bathed head of ' Brynhildr,' and ' Time, Death, and Judgment ' came to him as complete revelations, but for the most part his conceptions were evolved slowly and painfully. His art is not, in fact, a reproduction of that which is without; it is a representation of that which is within. It is that most difficult and hazardous of all aesthetic tasks. It is thought made visible.

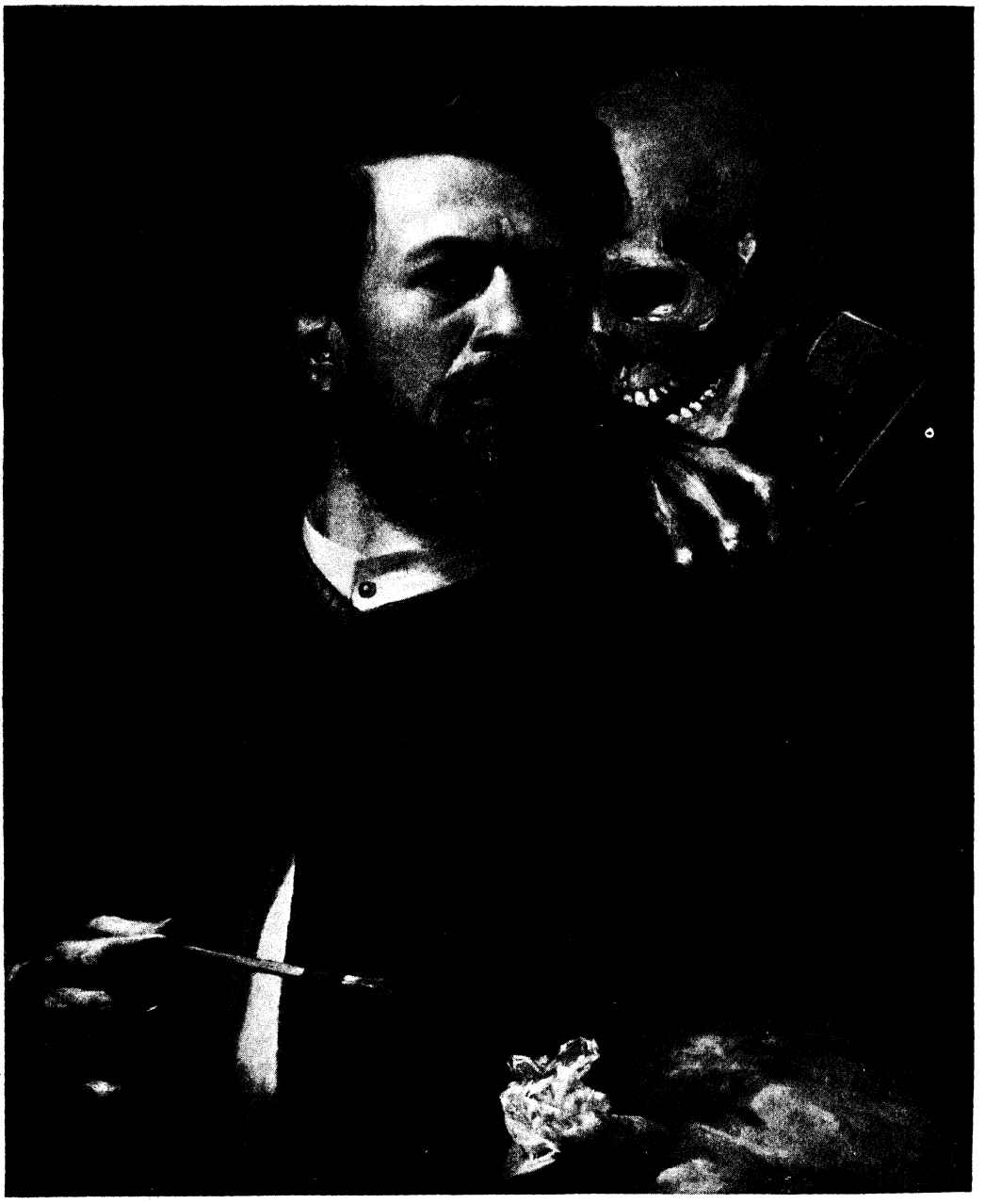
Just as he had in London shed about him loveliness and benevolence, so here in the open there grew up under his eye numerous tokens of charity and utility. Together with Mrs. Watts he built the picturesque Mortuary Chapel which stands in the grove near his house, and together they established, under the auspices of the Home Industries Association, a flourishing pottery at Compton, not far from the spot where Mrs. Watts has since erected a Picture Gallery containing as many of her husband's works as it has been possible to collect. And this Gallery, which he never saw, is perhaps the nearest approach to that Temple of Life of which he had dreamed so long and ardently. As time went on, though the weight of years bowed that slender frame, his spirit never faltered. Shortly before the end he remarked, with pathetic heroism, " I think aspiration will last as long as there is consciousness." He was in fact actually working on the huge model for his statue of ' Physical Energy ' when, on 1 July 1904, the final summons came.

Although the past had perhaps always clung too closely about him, and though he was not fated boldly to carry the banner of art into new territory, he nevertheless achieved that first and most precious of all victories—the victory over self. Eager, ruthless oncomers with the cruel intolerance of youth were soon to thrust aside his humble offering, yet the lesson of his life can never be overlooked. And as he lay there restful

and motionless in the deepening summer twilight it seemed as though, like his own ' Happy Warrior,' his brow must in truth have been softly kissed by one of those same beautiful, tender beings he had often summoned from the radiant beyond.

At the simple, impressive service in St. Paul's Cathedral which was attended by some of the foremost artists and statesmen in England, they played a Beethoven funeral march, the archdeacon reading that memorable prayer from Ecclesiasticus beginning: " Let us now praise famous men, and the fathers that begat us. Their bodies are buried in peace but their name liveth for evermore." The next day they left him sleeping on the sunlit hillside he loved so well, gently covered with lilies, the white and slender symbol of that immortality he had manfully won.

ARNOLD BÖCKLIN



ARNOLD BÖCKLIN

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

[*The National Gallery, Berlin*]

ARNOLD BÖCKLIN

IT is a significant fact that despite the encroachments of science and the increasing materialism of existence the Blue Flower of the ideal should have continued to flourish upon the earth. Lofty and impersonal with Watts, serene and Virgilian with Puvis de Chavannes, and dreamily sumptuous with Gustave Moreau, these glimpses of regions beyond or above more than held their own beside the sturdy reality of such masters as Menzel, Courbet, and Liebermann. By a logical process of development that which in England was detached and spiritual, and in France was vaguely formal and classic, became in Germany a superb apotheosis of native strength and force. The resistless trinity of modern Teutonic symbolism is composed of Richard Wagner, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Arnold Böcklin. It is they who have swept all before them, they who have routed prosaic notions of equality and have enthroned that disturbing and aggressive conception known as the Overman. It is in Germany alone that this new symbolism obtains, and it is impossible not to realize that it has flowed direct from the ironic outbursts of Nietzsche, the symphonic lava stream of Wagner, and the glowing colour poems of Böcklin. The specific product of a unified country, they embody, each in different terms, that same Pangermanism which in certain quarters is to-day considered so inspiring, and in others so menacing a world factor. While other cults are losing ground, converts are still flocking to this splendid, turbulent arena of fancy and of fable. Pale with

Watts, languid and exotic with Moreau, the flower of modern idealism blossoms with unparalleled luxuriance amid the gardens and meadows where the art of Arnold Böcklin finds its home. More than any of his colleagues does this extraordinary being represent creative imagination in its fullest, most robust florescence.

Scarcely anything could have been more arid and pedestrian than German art during the early half of the century just passed. There seems scant choice between the flaccid piety of Overbeck, Schadow, and the Nazarenes, and the congealed heroics of Cornelius and Schnorr. The plan of reviving national art on a religious basis, like the irrational return to medievalism, ended in sterility. Nazarenes had too much of the spiritual and too little of the temporal; romanticists too many of the trappings of romance and too small a spice of actuality. Neither the Passion nor the Nibelungenlied was interpreted with conviction. The Saviour was anaemic, and Siegfried preposterous. By the mid-century German painting had dwindled into an affair of monks, cloisters, brigands, cavaliers, tearful sunsets, and operatic crucifixions. This was at Düsseldorf. In Munich and Berlin had sprung into vogue under foreign influence a servile rendering of rural or domestic incident devoid of interest or illumination. During these infertile decades there had been no Delacroix, no Ingres, and no grave painters of wood and field. Kaulbach and Feuerbach held attention for a space, and Piloty, whose studio dramas had been borrowed from Delaroche, managed to cast over his canvases a gleam of surface richness, yet one after another each man and each movement failed to produce aught that was important or progressive. It was not, in fact, until certain of the later men began journeying to Paris instead of to Rome that the situation changed for the better, though even then the true redemption had to come from within. Possibly because the probation was so long, the rise

of the present school proved to be correspondingly rapid. While various elements contributed their quota, the impetus, so sudden and so manifest, was in main part due to a single individual, a man who stands almost alone in the annals of art.

Arnold Böcklin was a posthumous expression of Teutonic romanticism. He flashed forth as it were after the lights had simmered out bringing with him a fruitfulness hitherto unknown and a personal equipment riper than any since the Renaissance. With the mild exception of Schwind he had no precursors and no helpmates, yet by the overwhelming vitality of his nature he recreated the art of his country. Quietly and without parade he accomplished for German painting what Goethe had striven to achieve for German verse and what Wagner was endeavouring to attain for German opera. Through the medium of an exuberant mentality and a rich-set palette he revealed to Germans, and to the world, the Germanic soul. While in a measure he had no successors he fecundated an entire circle of men who have since left their traces not alone upon art, but upon literature and music as well. The sylvan brood of Hauptmann's ' Sunken Bell ' and the rhythmic sonority of Huber's ' Symphony in E minor ' are as direct a tribute to Böcklin's genius as is Hermann Urban's solemn variant on ' The Island of Death.' The forceful Stuck and the fatalistic Klinger, the idyllic Thoma and the statuesque Unger, have each profited by him, not to mention Greiner, Brück, and his own favoured pupils such as Sandreuter, Welti, von Pidoll, and Landsinger. The painters of Worpswede and Dachau owe to him not a little of their poetic view of landscape, while the boldest bits in the Secessionist exhibitions of Munich, Berlin, and Vienna, or the pages of Jugend are the offshoots of his overpowering personality.

Born in Basle, 16 October 1827, there was little in Böcklin's surroundings to foster an artistic career. It is true that his

father, who was a struggling silk merchant, had been moved to name his three sons Werner, Arnold, and Walther, after Schiller's 'Wilhelm Tell,' and that his maternal uncle was a house decorator, yet when the boy wished to devote himself to art his practical parent replied that there were already "enough hungry painters in the world." He meanwhile attended the local Drawing Academy as well as the Gymnasium, and spent day after day gazing at the wondrous collection of Holbeins in the dusky Hall of the University, little dreaming that they would later form, with his own works, the chief treasures of the Basle Museum. Had it not been for the shadow of Holbein, Böcklin might never have become a painter, for it is impossible to overestimate the influence of this master whose sense of verity was so exact and who showed such compelling energy in his fantastic and macaberesque conceptions. The boy also passed much of his time wandering alone in the open among the valleys or by the rushing river, and never, even in after life, did he forget the spirit of Holbein and the rugged silhouette of his Rhenish birthplace. The gradual awakening and development of Arnold Böcklin's genius forms one of the most troubled and inspiring pages in the history of art. Possessing typically Swiss independence and love of liberty, hardy and undaunted, he gathered momentum with each year, emerging at last from darkness into light, from poverty and neglect into general recognition and renown. Although this great, primordial man of the mountains and the sea lived to witness his triumph, it was not because he was more fortunate than his fellows, but because he was stronger and closer to nature than they. Nothing ever shook his purpose or caused him to swerve from his chosen path. Heroic of feature and of frame, he was blessed at birth with strength enough to carry himself to the ends of the earth, and while still in his teens began that odyssey which was so to enrich his soul, each halting place affording new substance and

SLEEPING DIANA

By Arnold Böcklin

[*Possession of Herr E. L. Behrens, Hamburg*]

new beauty, each fortifying and intensifying that which appeared to be an almost prenatal capacity for vigorous colour expression.

Responding to the pleadings of his wife and friends, who firmly believed in the lad's talent, the elder Böcklin at length consented to his son's departure for Düsseldorf, where he studied some two years under Hildebrand and Schirmer. Finding the vitiated atmosphere of the place little to his liking he next left with a companion, Rudolf Koller, for Brussels, Antwerp, and, after a short interval in Geneva, for Paris. While Schirmer gave him a fugitive appreciation of landscape, and the Flemish galleries stimulated his love of line and kindled his eye for tone, that which most impressed the young Swiss were the bloody and stirring scenes he witnessed on the streets of Paris during the Revolution of 1848. Though it was an unpropitious time for study, art was by no means neglected. Poor beyond belief the two friends took a single room in the rue de Verneuil, slept in one bed, and drew from models by day in the studio of a kindly compatriot. Invaluable as these preliminary experiences were, it was not until Böcklin returned to Basle and eventually reached Rome, with more enthusiasm than capital, that he entered upon his true aesthetic heritage. In Rome he joined the circle composed of Dreber, Feuerbach, Reinhold Begas, and the writers von Scheffel and Paul Heyse. They were eager, anxious days for one of the supreme colour poets of the century. Often compelled to sleep under the star-dotted sky for want of a roof over his head he staved off actual starvation by painting again and again the same views of the Coliseum and the Forum for the picture shops of the Via Condotti. Undeterred by the spectre of increased responsibilities, he married, in 1853, after a single day's acquaintance, Angelina Pascucci, a luxuriantly handsome Trasteverina. Though there were innumerable obstacles, religious and other, to their union, the

impetuous painter overcame them all, winning, as it happened, a noble and inspiring life partner. Yet his success as an artist was the reverse of encouraging, the first picture he exhibited having been condemned by the censor to be flung into the street.

This particular Roman sojourn, which lasted eight years in all, proved but the first of those constant oscillations between north and south which marked the remainder of Böcklin's career. Each time he visited Germany or Switzerland his art became more genial and robust. Each time he turned toward Rome or Florence it acquired that depth, stateliness, and austerity which are alone the gift of Italia, the foster-child, the younger sister, indeed, of Hellas. Arnold Böcklin was able to develop a specifically racial art because he possessed sufficient magic to impose his vision upon his countrymen, and because that vision embodied both the national taste for myth and the national love of antique beauty. The paintings of Böcklin are an aftermath of the Holy Roman Empire, the idea of which had haunted the Teutonic mind for ages. They reflect all the ineffable nostalgia of his land for the marble statues, cream-white villas, fountains, and cypress trees of Italy. This art is but another version of that Sehnsucht for the South which had already found voice in the ballads of Goethe, the prose fancies of Heine, and the inspired periods of Winckelmann. Once again it was the German viewing Greece through Renaissance eyes. The special form which Böcklin's appeal assumed involved a reincarnation under local conditions of the classic spirit. He early realized that the one way to treat such themes was to infuse them with modern passion and modern invention. Pan, Diana, Prometheus, monsters of the deep and grotesques of the forest, were given new semblance and new vitality. Not satisfied with existing types he peopled this pagan world with creatures of his own making. Nature was continually suggest-

ing to this vigorous, primal man forms half bestial and half human. Out of mountain spring or surging wave, from rocky cavern or gnarled tree trunk, issued at his beck the strange children of the great Earth Spirit. In essence this art is simply anthropomorphized thought. It is a species of graphic pantheism illustrating the kinship of man and nature, a conception common to all elemental minds. It was Böcklin's triumph to have refreshed and revitalized art, to have, in a sense, led human fancy back to its starting point.

While romantic in temperament Böcklin avoided the routine faults of romanticism. His eye for form was individual and his colour modern in its chromatic brilliancy. Even when treating classic scenes not the least charm of these stretches of meadow or sky, of shore or wood, is the anti-classic, Dionysian vein in which they are interpreted. Pagan Greece often fades before Lutheran Germany. Bacchus becomes a beer drinking burgher and the abundant humour of Hans Sachs now and then illumines the features of some grisly centaur. Always painted in a single key, there is never the slightest discord between matter and manner. Each canvas is a unit, the animate factors being but a more volatile embodiment of the inanimate. By a spontaneous, instinctive mental process Böcklin was able to project himself backward into prehistoric times. He never appears deliberately to have fabricated his motives; he seems to have placed upon canvas only that which he himself had witnessed. It is as though he were an accomplice, not a mere spectator of creation. To the cherished faculty of dealing unfettered with the past he added an explicit, detailed observation of the present. Though he turned through some hidden affinity toward the South, the traditional Italianism of Poussin, Claude, or the early Corot found no echo or equivalent in Böcklin's art. With no sacrifice of ideality he gave each theme a personal, veridical setting. He never copied nature, yet beautiful and

accurate botanical and geological data mark each outdoor scene. By means of a localization which was never slavish and always replete with suggestion, always tempered by the secret spirit of place, he succeeded in making romance real and reality romantic. There seems to lurk in these pictures, as in nature herself, some hidden, inexplicable meaning. More than any of his contemporaries Böcklin was an Inhaltskünstler. A mysterious, indefinable purport magnifies a hundredfold the actual beauty or solemnity of each flowered terrace, each castle by the sea.

It was not by rapid strides but through a long process of inner germination that Arnold Böcklin attained the fullness of his power. Like nature herself he grew slowly and silently. Having managed to make a few sales while in Rome, chiefly to friendly compatriots, he decided to return to Basle only to find his art received with open derision by his unappreciative townsfolk. Discouraged but persevering, he accepted a commission to decorate the dining room of Consul Wedekind's house in Hamburg, but here, too, disappointment was to await him. Despite their originality and imaginative force, his patron refused to accept the series of frescoes depicting man's relation to the elements, and it was only with the greatest difficulty that the painter received his meagre recompense for four months' arduous labour. Munich proved his next destination, and it was there, after a tragic prelude, that the tide at last turned in his favour. Utterly destitute and lying ill of typhoid fever, to which malady one of his children had succumbed, he sent to the Kunstverein a large canvas entitled ' Pan among the Reeds ' which was highly praised and subsequently purchased for the Pinakothek. In Munich he also found his former friend, Paul Heyse, and through his good offices made the acquaintance of Baron, afterward Count, von Schack who was already forming the nucleus of the now famous Schack Gallery. Although the

prices von Schack paid were the reverse of princely, he was a loyal, discerning Maecenas, and did much for the art of his day. Becoming somewhat better known, Böcklin was offered, in the autumn of 1860, a professorship in the newly inaugurated Academy of Arts in Weimar, having for his colleagues Lenbach, Begas, and Preller, the landscapist. Yet the sleepy scholasticism of Weimar, heavy with the shades of Goethe, Schiller, and Wieland, proved scarcely to his taste, and after an inactive interlude during which he produced little beyond ' Diana Hunting ' and ' Pan frightening a Goatherd,' he again fared southward visiting Naples, Capri, and Pompeii, and settling once more in Rome.

It was during this second Italian sojourn that Böcklin attained his artistic majority. The sapphire skies, the melancholy sweep of the Campagna, and the thrill of that legendary, Homeric world of Sicily gave him a richness and profundity of sentiment which forever influenced his development. Unconsciously his art divided itself into two distinct phases, the satyric, humorous paganism which had characterized ' Pan among the Reeds,' and ' Pan frightening a Goatherd,' and the solemn, lyric grandeur of ' The Villa by the Sea.' All that came after finds its genesis in either of these two moods. They express by turns, or simultaneously, the man's exultant vitality and that subdued, permeating intensity which form the essence of his entire achievement. Although born of the mountains, he was singularly fond of the ocean, and year by year responded more and more to the fascination of the Mediterranean. Returning again and again throughout his lifetime to this land of myth and tradition he gradually adjusted nature to his own particular imaginative requirements. Sunburned shepherds tending their flocks became fauns, dolphins sporting in the waves became nereids at play, and castles high upon storm-smitten cliffs were sacked and burned by ruthless pirate bands.

He even dreamed of building himself a home on one of the Siren Islands opposite Almafi, the supposed originals of Scylla and Charybdis, but his own ' Villa by the Sea ' the better realized that romantic ambition. It was not in fact until much later that he was able to equal the poetic invocation of these wind-tossed cypresses, these crumbling walls, and this dark, Iphigenian figure watching the waves break at her feet. The last survivor of a departing race she must herself ere long be borne to that ' Island of Death ' where the very soul of antiquity lies immured.

In strong contrast to the brooding melancholy of the ' Villa by the Sea ' was the joyous, idyllic ' Daphnis and Amaryllis ' of the succeeding year, one of Böcklin's happiest Theocritean fantasias which he composed shortly before his return to Basle. His home-coming on this occasion was more encouraging, for shortly after his arrival he was asked to decorate the summer room of the Villa Sarasin-Thurneysen as well as the stairway of the recently erected Museum. The stay in Basle was marked by a number of portraits and also by a trinity of canvases small in compass but striking in conception including ' The Ride of Death,' ' The Rocky Gorge,' which was suggested by his own crossing of the St. Gotthard Pass as well as by Mignon's song, and the ' Furies pursuing a Murderer ' all of which are now in the Schack Gallery. They were still romance pure and simple but more concentrated, more dramatic, than the romance of his day. Slowly but surely he was acquiring that unity of mood, that identity between mental state and natural phenomena which became the keynote of all his subsequent work. The stay in Basle lasted five years, and as a sardonic memento of his visit he left on the garden façade of the Kunsthalle six sculptured masks caricaturing with wilful exuberance the leading pillars of a community at whose phlegmatic indifference to matters of art he could at last afford to laugh. The years which ensued

were increasingly productive. His vision grew clearer, its formulation more concise, and he was able to give full sweep to capabilities which had hitherto found but limited scope. Plunging at once into a mythical, pagan realm he depicted the ' Battle of the Centaurs,' which as a masterly epitome of the fury of natural forces not only recalls but surpasses Rubens's ' Lion Hunt.' ' Pan Fishing ' and the ' Nereid and Triton ' of the Schack Gallery followed within a few months. To the latter theme Böcklin returned time after time, the deep-sea mystery and dazzling brightness of sky and wave which he attained with such assurance having never been surpassed. Sometimes, as in ' Naiads at Play ' and ' Sport of the Waves,' he was jovial and humorous. In ' The Silence of the Ocean ' he spread over the blue expanse an infinitude of calm, while in Herr Simrock's ' Triton and Nereid ' his mood assumed epic significance. The nereid, superb in her nacreous lustre of tint, is desirous and insatiate. The triton, his eyes averted, gazes across the waste of waters with all the dumb, undefined pathos of creature part man and part aquatic monster. They were born in the dawn of life, this strangely mated pair. They belong to dim, rudimentary days; around them wash the waves of purple Oceanus.

After four years in the Bavarian capital Böcklin recrossed the Alps settling this time in Florence, where, under the inspiration of the Renaissance painters, his art acquired a more formal perfection and still deeper emotional import. It proved indeed his supreme creative period. With each canvas his colouring became more sonorous and intense and his invention correspondingly vivid and daring. The beautiful ' Sleeping Diana,' ' The Fields of the Blessed,' ' The Island of Death,' ' Prometheus,' and ' The Sacred Grove ' are but a few of the imaginative masterpieces which succeeded each other with majestic calm and surety. ' The Island of Death ' with its gently swaying cypresses, burnished waters, and barge gliding irre-

sistibly toward its craterlike bourne is one of the most penetrant evocations of any age. Noble in tonality, impeccable in composition, and infinite in tragic suggestion, the picture typifies both the solemnity of a vanished world and the restless interrogation of later times. It is at once an elegy upon antiquity and a symbol of human longing for divine peace and transfiguration. Silently and inevitably the past and the future are brought face to face among these dark island catacombs. From the sublime awe of ' The Island of Death ' Böcklin rose with undiminished power to the heights whereon his Aeschylean ' Prometheus ' lies chained to the inaccessible crags of Caucasus. Here again is allegory of a profound order, for this colossal, cloudlike figure suggests not only the battle of gods and giants but the blunt, unceasing struggle of mankind for a more exalted estate. The vast, titanic form of this ' Prometheus,' so vaguely outlined that he seems almost an atmospheric vision, marks the climax of Böcklin's quasi-classical manner. With undimmed clarity and zest he turned from purpureal threnody to the glaucous splendour of ' The Sport of the Waves.' The famous " blue phase " was over. He emerged once again into the light of the sun.

For the sake of his children's education Böcklin next moved to Zürich, where he bought a house at Hottingen, in the Riesbach district, and built himself a big, wooden studio. The world had at last begun to recognize his originality and his greatness. Honours fell to his lot, and he gathered about him a devoted coterie of friends, including the novelists, Gottfried Keller and Ferdinand Conrad Meyer, and the artists, Stauffer-Bern and Otto Lasius. His tastes were those of a simple, normal Swiss bourgeois. His studio was bare and workmanlike containing none of the sumptuous atrocities which so appealed to Makart or Munkácsy. For him not only was the kingdom of heaven, but in large measure the kingdom of earth, within. He was a

THE FIELDS OF THE BLESSED

By Arnold Böcklin

(The National Gallery, Berlin)

slow producer, and would sit for days beside an untouched canvas, his soul imprisoned by a line from Tasso, by some uncouth, Boeotian suggestion, or a glimpse into the fabulous fore-time of the universe. From the first he had been a law unto himself, caring as little for the conventional in life as for the quotidian in art. When asked by Wagner, who greatly admired his work, to undertake the scenic decorations for the ' Ring ' he laconically replied that he did not care " to make pictures for music." His was essentially an isolated nature. In conversation he was diffident and often constrained, though on occasions displayed abounding good humour. Society he abhorred; he had to be dragged, almost, to his daughter's wedding, arriving late and sitting far back in the church with hair awry and eyes tense with emotion. His boon companion during these Zürich days was Gottfried Keller, as great a nationalist in letters as Böcklin himself was in art. Often they might have been seen passing arm in arm along the winding streets of Lavater's town or sitting, almost any evening, " Zum Pfauen " over their beer, enveloped in dense clouds of tobacco smoke. Though his life was darkened by domestic misfortune, and though he was cruelly shaken by the death of Keller, he continued to paint with unabated energy until 1892 when he was severely, almost fatally stricken by apoplexy. On his recovery he turned for the fourth and last time to Italy, his foster home, passing the remainder of his days at his villa in San Domenico midway between Florence and Fiesole.

When again strong enough to resume work this epic man showed but slight diminution of power, ' Venus Genetrix,' ' Polyphemus,' and ' Orlando Furioso ' being only a trifle below his accustomed standard. Surrounded by a numerous and talented family, and acclaimed the length and breadth of Germany on the occasion of his seventieth birthday, the last few years of Böcklin's life were calm and quiescent. In a minor

way his home became, like Wagner's Wahnfried, the Mecca of faithful admirers, who came, chiefly from over the Alps, to spend a few days or hours with the master-fantast now grown grey and taciturn and never, indeed, caring aught for worldly honours or adulation. His own odyssey, which had proved so fertile, was over, and he seldom left the peaceful walks and terraces of his villa from whence he could see the valley of the Arno, the heights of Lastra, and by night the reflected radiance of the city below. Because of his massive head and military bearing the Italians called him "Bismarck," for it was not until shattered by successive apoplectic strokes that his iron frame lost its erectness and vigour. Though he continued at his easel to the last, painting within a year or so of his death 'Melancholy,' 'War,' and a black-winged 'Plague,' the great work, by the beginning of the century, lay behind, not before him. Almost inarticulate, and moving with short, ataxic gestures, he seemed like one of those mythical, hyperborean creatures which had so long peopled his brain. Unable to see the ocean which he so loved, he would place to his ears big, multicoloured shells, and sit for hours listening to the murmur of distant waters. Hastened by an attack of pneumonia the end came on 16 January 1901. Two days later, at five o'clock in the afternoon, they bore him to the Campo Santo degli Allori just beyond the gates of Florence. There was but a handful of mourners present and the services were extremely simple. It had been a dark, overcast day, with only a few gleams of sunlight. As they left him reposing on the undulating slope, watched over by tall cypresses, the western sky was suffused by a glory of pale gold and a gentle wind stirred the protecting tree-tops.

Arnold Böcklin belongs to the Olympians of art. Phenomenally endowed, he was a doer as well as a dreamer. Few men have ever come into the world with such abundant natural

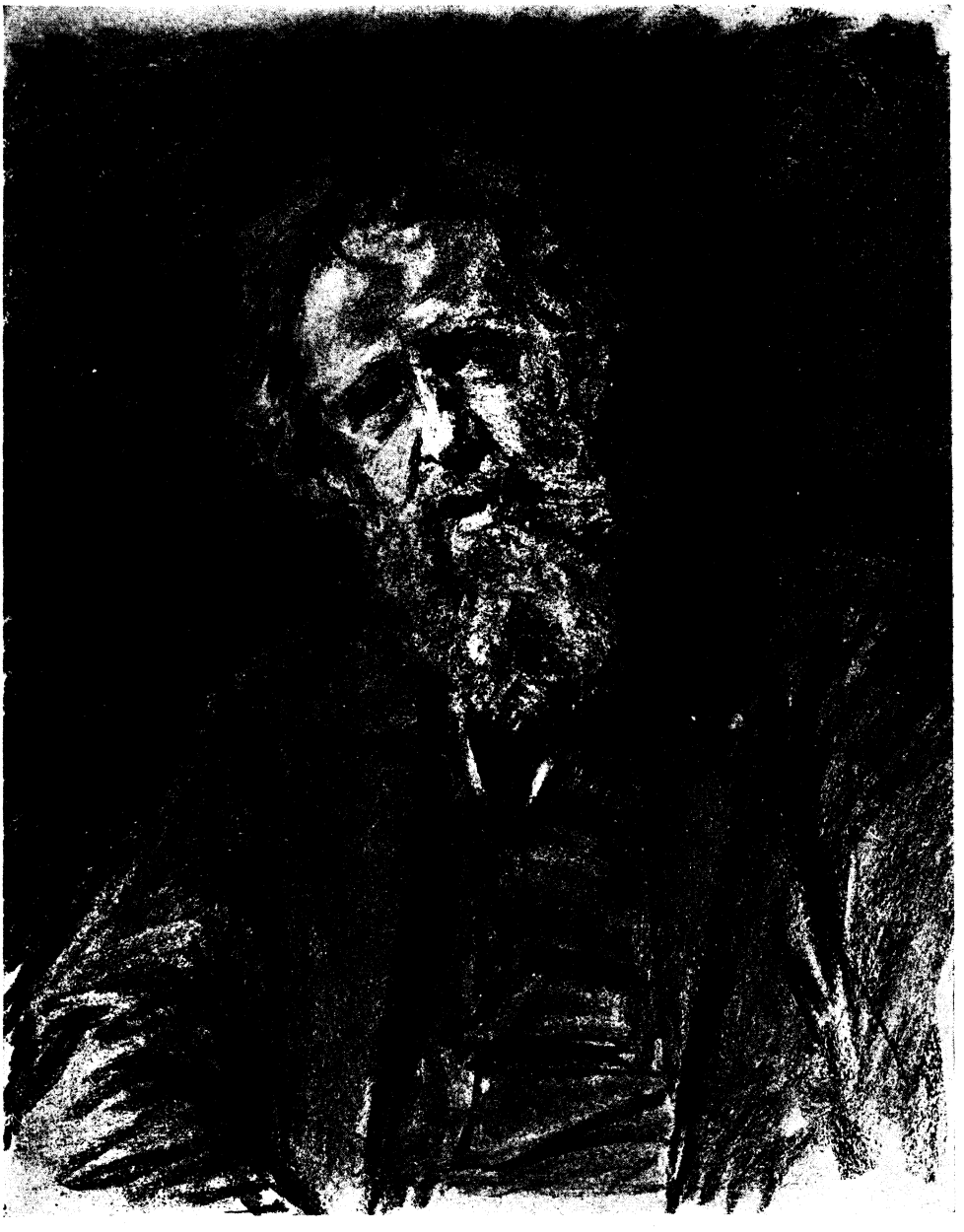
gifts and such boundless physical energy. Not only was he a great painter; he was a great thinker as well. There was practically nothing he did not know concerning the technique of his craft. For months at a time, particularly in Zürich, he devoted his mind to chemistry in order to familiarize himself with the properties of various pigments. Throughout his entire life, though notably in Weimar, he busied himself with mechanics, it being his cherished ambition to solve the problem of aerial navigation. Although, in company with a goodly number of Icarians, he failed, no less an authority than Helmholtz, on examining his models, which were based upon the flight of birds, averred that the painter had come nearer success than anyone he had known. Like other members of his family he was a gifted musician as well as an indefatigable reader, mainly of medieval and ancient authors, his favourites being Tasso, Ariosto, and Homer, and on all questions philosophical or aesthetic he held emphatic and illuminating opinions. His numerous portraits of himself offer an excellent index to the outward appearance of the man, the best of them being the calm, virile likeness in which he holds a wine-glass in his hand, and an earlier canvas showing him pausing an instant while Death plays in his ears elusive, spectral harmonies, a variant, of course, on Holbein's 'Sir Bryan Tuke' in the Munich Pinakothek. And yet with his hirsute head, his powerful arms, and his profound affinity with bygone ages and epochs, he suggested above all else Chiron, the wisest and justest of the centaurs, who stands knee-deep and pensive in the azure pool which waters the painter's own 'Fields of the Blessed.'

The most unusual feature about Böcklin was, however, the incredible strength and perfection of his eyes, which were a clear blue-grey. "I like to look straight into the sun," he remarked to Professor Horner of Zürich, and doubtless he was able to do so. It was in large measure because of this remark-

able visual faculty that Böcklin became the supreme colourist he was. His eyes literally drank up the varied hues about him, and no image, once received, was ever lost or ever became blurred. Although he lived constantly in the open, he never made sketches, always preferring to paint from memory. He chose by instinct the most diverse and alluring tints—the blazing glory of midday, the vapoury softness of a lunar landscape, the grotto-blue of the sea, the copper-brown of faun's skin, or the viridescence of water serpent. He saw colour everywhere and in everything. The hazy Campagna, sharp vistas of the Juras, foam-lashed rocks along the Sicilian coast, or the hyacinthine uplands of Tuscany in springtime—here a splash of sunlight, there a stretch of dark forest—all afforded him an incomparable accumulation of optical stimuli. Unlike most artists he composed in colours instead of in line or mass giving each work a distinct tonal unity which could not fail to compel attention. Yet in common with his great contemporary in the realm of opera, Böcklin, like Wagner, often deliberately varied what might otherwise have proved a smooth, melodic utterance. Both painter and musician were the avowed apostles of abrupt, almost crude, transitions. It is they who have best demonstrated the emotional and artistic value of occasional dissonance. Though he sometimes drew the figure with welcome precision it is to be regretted that Böcklin's plastic sense was not more highly developed, for in this province he is easily excelled by the vigour of Stuck or the eurhythmic elegance of Gysis. Sane and affirmative, the art of Böcklin is concerned with no problems either pious or social, its only possible text being a fearless proclamation of the identity of all created things. "A picture must be painted for the eye, not for the mind," he maintained, and it is for the eye that this art exists. It was Arnold Böcklin's aesthetic mission to mirror his soul in a continuous cycle of beauty and mystery. A Teuton to the core, he accomplished

that which had so long baffled his fellow-countrymen. By the magic of his brush, and with all nature for his palette, he succeeded in blending Germanic fantasy and Hellenic blitheness. Like Euphorion, he was a typical child of those two master currents, Antiquity and the Renaissance, out of which has emerged the questing modern world.

CONSTANTIN MEUNIER



CONSTANTIN MEUNIER

Portrait of the artist by Max Liebermann

[*Courtesy of Herr Liebermann*]

CONSTANTIN MEUNIER

TO have led art from palace and cathedral to cottage door and into field and factory, to have delivered her from the hands of king, priest, or noble patron and presented her unfettered to the people, is not the least triumph of the nineteenth century. Once aristocratic and pietistic, art is to-day also democratic and socialistic. Although it took the peasants of France but a few months to storm the Bastille and sack the Tuileries the moment was long preparing. Though in a similar way it has only been within the present generation that art has attained universal suffrage, it was as far back as the early 'twenties that the movement had its inception. Curiously enough, a flamboyant romanticist, Géricault, was one of the first to recognize the dignity and power of labour. It was not Millet, but such masters as Géricault, Cals, and Jenron who were the true heralds of the proletariat in art, who were the original champions of the man in sabots and smock. For a good quarter of a century he moved clumsily, even timidly, in this new realm of form and colour. With the redoubtable Courbet he entered aggressively into his own. While Géricault's ' Lime-kiln ' and the humble rustics and vagabonds of Cals were experimental, it was with something akin to savage assurance that the ' Stone-breakers ' of Gustave Courbet crushed under their swinging blows the marble pedestal of a frigid, exclusive, and antiquated temple of beauty. By the 'fifties work had become a theme in itself. Across the Channel Ford Madox

Brown was inspired to paint its apotheosis, and some years later the perceptive Adolf von Menzel, to whom no phase of human activity was foreign, gave the world a third great picture of labour with his 'Rolling Mill.' Thus far, however, work had been treated in a broad, symbolic vein. Despite their unquestioned sincerity Courbet's 'Stone-breakers,' Millet's sober toilers on the plain of Fontainebleau, and Menzel's grimy iron-moulders of Königshütte were not sharply individualized. There was still something theoretical about them; the idea still loomed larger than the fact behind it. With the exception of Millet, work was with these painters an episode rather than an experience, a chance text rather than a permanent condition. It was not in France, nor England, nor Germany, but in a smaller, more compact, and more densely populated country that labour and the labouring man assumed their rightful place in the domain of aesthetics. It was not, indeed, until the rise of modern industrialism, not until they had gained unity and organization that these serfs of civilization captured the citadel of art.

There is singular propriety in the fact that Flanders and the Low Countries, which were the first to free themselves from the tyranny of Court and Church, should also have been the scene of this new conquest for the extension of the artistic franchise. Certain timid spirits are fond of contending that industrialism is the enemy of aesthetic expression. The factory and the forge, the coal-pit and the quarry, are supposed to crush beauty, to obliterate art. Yet the contrary is true. No country is more industrial than Belgium. Within a few decades the meadows of Brabant, the leafy copses of Hainaut, and the valleys of the Meuse and the Sambre have been seamed and blistered by myriads of collieries and iron-foundries. The whole face of the land has been seared and the sky blackened by fumes from countless chimneys and blast-furnaces. Man,

ANTWERP DOCK-HAND

From the bronze by Constantin Meunier

[*The Luxembourg, Paris*]

instead of remaining pastoral, has become a dusky, subterranean creature. His back is bowed and the song on his lips has turned to a bitter harangue for easier hours and better pay. Everything, it would seem, has conspired to annihilate art and the sense of beauty, yet both have survived and even taken on new and profound significance. The novels of Camille Lemonnier, the verse of Verhaeren, and the gentle mysticism of Maeterlinck have all flowered on this sombre battlefield of industry. In painting Frédéric and Laermans reveal a vital and penetrating mastery, while the sculpture of George Minne displays a dolorous and tender appeal. It is not despite, it is rather because of, existing conditions that such results have been achieved. The art of Belgium is uncompromisingly social. It has never been, and can never be, a mere matter of play or prettiness. Nowhere is the social function of art more clearly understood; nowhere is its vindication more concrete or more absolute. Except for a brief excursion into romanticism the Belgians have always been hardy, resolute realists, and never more so than during the century just passed. Early in his troubled career there gathered about the pathetic, sedentary figure of Charles de Groux a group of men whose creed was actuality, whose passion was not a vapid, languid loveliness, but a truth that could enlist the deepest human sympathies and aspirations. Yet it was not in the paintings of these apostles of the poor, these friends of the forlorn and famished, nor in letters either, that the supreme accent of the movement was manifested. It was voiced in the austere yet benign, the vigorous yet resigned art of Constantin Meunier. One by one his colleagues turned aside leaving the youngest member of the group to find the path alone. And he, too, seemed to deflect for a while, though only to return with renewed strength and fortitude.

In his reticence and simple ruggedness and sincerity Con-

stantin Meunier recalls the master-craftsmen of other, sturdier times. He passed away at seventy-four, in the fullness of effort, for he was one of those who mature but slowly. With the exception of a brief journey to Spain he scarcely left his native land. "I have never had any adventures," he once said, "I have only dreamed and worked." Though modern in feeling his art is both Gothic and Greek, both restless and serene. It is above everything an art that typifies the spirit of the hour. All the fierce energy, all the material pride and progress, and inventive genius of to-day are reflected in Meunier's miners and foundrymen, his puddlers and glassblowers. The logical product of the country of his birth, he was the first sculptor who saw plastic beauty in the workman, the first to give labour the precious baptism of art. Born at Etterbeek, a suburb of Brussels, 12 April 1831, the son of an impecunious tax-collector and the grandnephew of a smith whose three boys had left home to follow the banners of Napoleon, Constantin Meunier was distinctly of the people. Left a widow with six young children to provide for, his mother, who was a gentle, tenacious soul, moved from Etterbeek to a small house in the place du petit Sablon where she opened a modest dressmaking establishment and rented her few spare rooms. A timid, pallid child with huge head and slender, angular frame, Constantin was placed almost wholly in the care of his elder brother, Jean-Baptiste, who was a journeyman printer and later an engraver of note. From birth the boy was emotionally supersensitive and until fifteen used to weep every evening toward sundown. Having been previously taught drawing by Jean-Baptiste, Constantin, at seventeen, entered the studio of the florid, academic Fraikin in order to learn the rudiments of sculpture. During his three years with Fraikin the lad did little beside tend the fire with complete circumspection, keep the clay wet, and imbibe an utter loathing for the insipid elegance of the school then in

vogue. Although his debut as a sculptor was made at the Brussels Salon of 1851 with ' The Garland,' he evinced but slight enthusiasm for the plastic arts, and on entering the atelier Saint-Luc was readily induced by de Groux and others to renounce sculpture for painting. The change was a consistent one, for the poignant verity which these masters sought to lay bare could be better told by brush and crayon. The moment when sculpture was to take up the burden of contemporary life had not yet come.

Insensibly and perhaps through some awakening religious atavism, Constantin Meunier's rigid, contemplative spirit was next drawn toward the shadows of the cloister. Oppressed by the sorrow and poverty about him and seeking perchance solace or self-immolation, he went to live, as Verhaeren afterward did, among the Trappist monks. At Westmalle in the Flemish Campine he found a fitting retreat, and in both cases the sequestration proved fruitful, the painter's ' Burial of a Trappist ' and ' Stoning of St. Stephen ' being curiously paralleled by the zealous exaltation of the poet's ' Friars.' Yet always Meunier must have felt that sacred art, however pleading and human, was not his final expression. It was inevitable that he should have sought to widen his sympathies, to enrich a somewhat sober, hectic palette. Just as Maeterlinck later turned from ' Ruysbroeck the Admirable ' to ' The Treasure of the Humble,' so Constantin Meunier drifted gradually from the passivity of monastic existence into a broader fellowship and brotherhood. Bowed figures in dim, grey chapels and those twisted images of Christ on the wayside crosses of Flanders seemed, after all, less beseeching than the poor labourer who hurried by making the sign. Meanwhile he was more than a mere spectator of mortal suffering and misery. Having married young and finding scant sale for his pictures he was forced, together with de Groux, who was an even sadder victim of ill

fortune, to support himself and family by executing designs for stained glass and drawing heads of saints for cheap printed handkerchiefs. They worked side by side, these two friends of humanity, for Capronnier, the ecclesiastical decorator, and in the churches of Louvain, Châtelineau and throughout the province of Liège may still be seen windows or stations of the cross fashioned by the sweat of their brows and the blood of their starved artist souls.

On his return from Spain, whither he had been sent by the government to copy Kempeneer's 'Descent from the Cross,' Meunier definitely left the monastery for the mine, definitely gave up colour for clay and bronze. The visit to Spain, where pity is almost a pastime, and something in the man's own mental and moral austerity impelled him to visit that "Black Country" which is itself scarcely more than an industrial inquisition. An opportune commission to furnish the illustrations for Camille Lemonnier's descriptive book on Belgium caused him to make a systematic tour of the region, and it was not long before he realized that he had at last found the field for which he had so earnestly been seeking. At first he drew and painted as before, but one day in the Borinage, as he was passing the entrance of a mine he happened to catch sight of a group of workmen, toil-stained and stripped to the waist, emerging from the depths into the glow of evening. He instinctively felt that the rhythm of their movements and the heavy, yet supple elasticity of their bodies could be translated only by sculpture. So strong was his conviction, and so implicit was his faith in himself, that this man of past fifty suddenly gave up his career as a painter and began his artistic life afresh. He proceeded to study the labourer in all his aspects and attitudes. He lived for a time at Val Saint-Lambert among the glassblowers, and later among the foundrymen and puddlers of Seraing. All along that black, stifling belt which stretches from

WATERING A COLLIERY HORSE

From the group by Constantin Meunier

[*Square Ambiorix, Brussels*]

Liège to Charleroi and from Charleroi to Mons he watched those dogged sons of Cain fulfilling their sinister destiny. At Frameries and Pâturages he found them stunted, deformed, and stamped with tragic depression, but for the most part they displayed a silent heroism and a primitive energy which turned pity into admiration. Still, he did not spend his entire time indoors nor under ground among creatures more like antique troglodytes than human beings. He also went abroad in the sun, with the mower or the happy harvester. It was work which he chose for his theme, work and the workmen in their every phase.

All the man's passion for form and contour which had thus far lain dormant surged forward with resistless impetus. He actually appeared to grow younger, to undergo a species of physical as well as artistic rebirth. The whole of his previous life was but a prolonged apprenticeship for that which followed. At the outset he modelled little figures in wax, which, though crude, were rich in vital intensity. Within a few short years he had attained the accent of assured mastery. The fight for recognition nevertheless proved a bitter struggle. 'The Hammerman' and 'The Puddler' which were exhibited in Brussels and in Paris during 1885 and 1886 were received with more curiosity than enthusiasm. Although their appearance synchronized with the rise of the Labour Party in Belgium and elsewhere, few realized the significance either social or aesthetic of these majestic, submissive giants of the forge and furnace or saw that they possessed any special claim to consideration. It was naturally difficult for an artist who had suddenly changed his medium to secure commissions, and feeling uncertain of the future, Meunier was compelled to accept the professorship of painting at the Academy of Louvain. For family reasons alone the sacrifice was made, and in 1887 he left his humble quarters in Brussels for the grey, scholastic town of Father Damien.

Yet this apparent renunciation did not prove in vain, for it was here that Constantin Meunier revealed the measure of his power as an artist, and it was here that he proved his deep understanding of the sad, ennobling beauty of toil. Instead of being a barren exile the years at Louvain proved the vigil of his glory. He worked unremittingly, pausing only to attend his classes. Statue followed statue, and group succeeded group, until he had almost completed that valiant hymn to labour which constitutes the fitting climax of his life task. The majority of these passive, cyclopean creatures as well as numerous busts and reliefs were either planned or executed at Louvain. Most of them were men, though he now and then modelled a female figure such as the buoyant ' Mine Girl ' or the mother crushed beneath a weight of anguish and fatality in that tragic episode entitled ' Fire-damp.' Animals, too, he made share their portion of creation's inflexible destiny. Like Zola in ' Germinal ' he felt drawn toward those sodden brutes condemned to plod dumbly amid suffocating darkness. With the ' Old Mine Horse ' he gave but another version of ' Bataille ' in all his spent and helpless decrepitude. Meunier's sympathetic observation was meanwhile not exclusively confined to the " Black Country." Little by little he widened his circle of activity by adding ' The Mower ' and ' The Ploughman,' ' The Reaper ' glancing at the noonday sun, and ' The Sower ' scattering his seed with an impressive, primeval sweep of the arm. ' The Quarryman,' too, he transferred to this cycle of human effort nor did he neglect ' The Brickmaker ' or ' The Dockhand.' Bit by bit he enlarged his panorama, omitting the incidental and bringing into closer accord that which was general and typical. And by and by the varied elements began to show a certain community of feeling as though obeying a single, unifying impulse. Although the actual subject-matter of his art had changed he rigorously adhered to the inner law of his being.

THE QUARRYMAN

From the bronze by Constantin Meunier

[*The Modern Gallery, Brussels*]

He had simply turned from the heroes and martyrs of faith to those humbler though not less eloquent victims of economic pressure and distress.

The studio in which this earnest, patriarchal man worked from dawn until nightfall was situated on the outskirts of the town. The building was known as the " Amphitheatre " having for a long time served as the dissecting room of a near-by medical college. It was a grim, sepulchral structure, tower-shaped and pierced by high, arched windows some of which were roughly boarded over. The interior was dim even at mid-day, for the walls were darkened by the moisture of ages. In the seclusion of this sleepy Gothic town, the silence broken only by the sound of distant bells or the footfall of some chance passer-by Meunier remained almost a decade. He rarely had an assistant, preferring to execute even the most rudimentary tasks with his own hands. Pale, long-bearded and wearing a béret and plain grey blouse he wrought with the solemn pre-occupation of one performing an almost sacred office. Guided by the inherent simplicity and grandeur of his own nature he looked at all things simply and grandly, his antique energy of purpose being tinged by Christian sorrow and self-sacrifice. Mystic to the core, he was at times the prey of hallucinations more or less vivid. He appeared to be in constant communion with the great spirits of the past. The impress of things gone and the shadows of things to come were always upon him. " I am never alone here," he would often say, grimly referring to the countless departed souls who seemed to haunt the place. His psychic powers were not, alas, purely fanciful, for the precise hour his younger son, the beloved " marin," was lost at sea he had a distinct presentment of the event. This blow coupled with the death a few months later of his talented elder son, Karl, turned Meunier's eyes once again toward the pensive consolation of sacred themes. A pitiful, tortured ' Ecce Homo,'

a ' Prodigal Son,' full of filial trust and paternal forgiveness, and a ' Pietà ' are the mute records of his suffering and resignation.

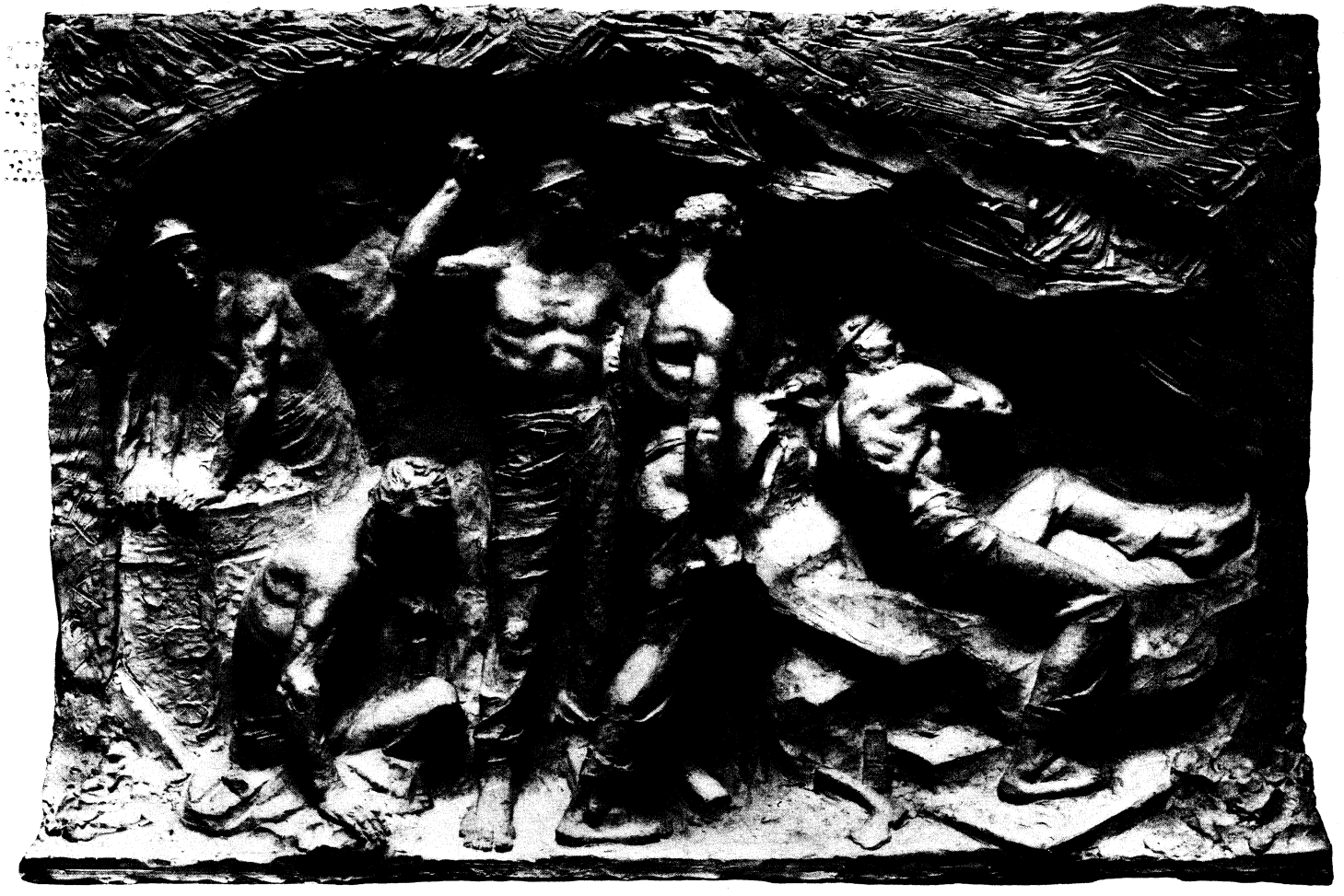
A wish to leave the scene of his bereavement, as well as the necessity for better facilities in order to finish the monumental groups already under way caused Meunier to return to Brussels. He had moreover partially overcome the wasting fight against poverty and could afford to give up the tedium of daily instruction. In the old period of obscure, unregarded effort he had lived first in the rue des Secours and afterward in the rue de la Consolation. On this occasion he settled in the rue Albert-Delatour, also in the district of Schaerbeek, moving later to 59 rue de l'Abbaye. Although his step was slower and his shoulders drooped beneath the double weight of grief and increasing infirmity, once established he devoted himself afresh to his art, completing in succession ' Watering a Colliery Horse ' for the square Ambiorix, and a ' Trinity ' for Notre Dame du Sablon besides several single figures and portrait-busts. As this silent army of toilers slowly assumed their proper places in the long perspective of his art Meunier began to perceive that unity in his accomplishment which was apparent to all interested observers. He had never been strong, and realizing that his days were numbered dedicated his few remaining years to that ' Monument to Labour ' which is his crowning achievement and the eloquent synthesis of his career. Conscious of the vastness of the project he sought Government aid, on failing to obtain which he undertook the task himself piece by piece. Unable to pay for marble or for bronze casting, he went manfully ahead finishing his scheme in plaster. Dominated by the colossal figure of ' The Sower,' flanked by four reliefs entitled ' Industry,' ' The Mine,' ' Commerce,' and ' Harvest ' with groups about the base depicting ' Maternity ' and the several ' Trades,' Constantin Meunier's canticle in

praise of work ranks as one of the most impressive conceptions in the history of sculpture. It was his legacy to the world, and before the end came he had the supreme joy of knowing that it was purchased by the State and would eventually be placed in the rotunda of the new museum on the Mont des Arts.

As with every true craftsman Meunier's task was left unfinished. The monument to Émile Zola for the Tuileries is not in place and other commissions were barely begun. The message of his art none the less remains full and complete. Even at the outset there was no mistaking the man's meaning. Stripped of trivial accident and exalted to a plane of simplicity that raises them beside the creations of any age these types are untrammelled by theory or thesis. Meunier never dealt directly in generalities; he approached the general through the particular. He gives us a single more or less specialized figure, and if that figure spontaneously becomes a symbol the symbolizing process is as much our own as his. He disavowed all intention, all parti pris. He claimed no rights other than the right to pity the world's disinherited and to place that pity on record. When recognition finally came and he was hailed as the creator of a new epoch in art, as the founder of the " aesthetics of work " he simply looked puzzled and exclaimed " Why what can they all see in my poor stuff? " Those few enthusiasts who gathered about Constantin Meunier during the late 'eighties and early 'nineties and those fortunate individuals who attended his first exhibitions in Brussels, Paris, and Dresden to-day cherish unforgettable memories. They have seen gropings and hesitations end in a grand, though troubled triumph. They have watched a sustained and resolute symmetry issue from that which was rough and tentative. Above all, they have witnessed in the man and his art the ascendency of that which is spiritual over that which is material. For sincerity, intensity, and epic dignity the bronzes of Meunier

stand alone. Though explicit in subject, they share affinities with the eternally sculptural. Meunier's labourer is both local and immemorial. He taps at a vein or pauses before a pot of molten metal, yet he embodies universal dynamic laws.

In the serene and buoyant days of Greece the wrestler and the athlete were the chief exponents of motion. Man was not a sullen, driven beast, he was acclaimed in the Stadium. Christian art taught him penance and renunciation, taught him not to immortalize but to mortify the body. With Michelangelo he became a surly colossus full of grandiose inquietude, and with Clodion a white and wanton boy. In recent times sculpture has made him echo, somewhat feebly, a remote antiquity or chafe against a ruthless modernity. The specific triumph of Constantin Meunier consists in having bridged over the past, in having adapted sovereign, immutable truths to actual conditions. In this art, which appears at first so revolutionary, he has not overthrown, he has preserved, the lasting canons of plastic beauty. Gods and gladiators have merely been put into harness. Infolding draperies, soft as sea-foam from the Aegean, have been exchanged for rough blouse and leather apron. Mercury has slipped his winged heels into sabots; the flexible Discobolus has learned to swing a sledge. It is not Venus, it is Vulcan whom this new race worships. Being but a continuation of that which had gone before, there are numerous correspondences between this art and the generous symmetry of the ancient manner. That early drama of action, the Pergamum frieze, is the direct prototype of Meunier's reliefs. Each depicts struggle, the one simply epitomizing a former phase of strife. Weeping Niobe has her counterpart in the grief-stricken mother of 'Fire-damp,' and the 'Old Mine Horse' is but an abused and forlorn Pegasus. Coming down to the Renaissance, the rider in 'Watering a Colliery Horse' is none other than a Colleoni of the people. Over all Meunier's



THE MINE

From the Monument to Labour, by Constantin Meunier

[The Modern Gallery, Brussels]

groups, however tense and concentrated lingers that static repose which is the priceless heritage of Hellas. And yet this art is not classic, nor Christian, nor modern; it is all three. It illustrates the gradual and consistent evolution of the plastic principle.

With the moral aspect of aesthetics Meunier was never concerned. Though his message is manifestly human and social, he never posed as a man with a mission. He was content to approach life in the concrete leaving press and public draw whatever conclusions they saw fit. There is of course a certain affinity between Meunier's miners and Millet's peasants in the fields about Barbizon. Though representing different strata they share, each of them, a similar community of inspiration. Each shows alike the stamp of that endless struggle of man against natural fatality. Millet's types are, however, more pathetic and self-pitying; Meunier's, more resourceful and self-reliant. While every statue, every bit of bronze bears in some degree the burden of toil and the burden of sorrow, this art is not, in essence, a protest, but an acceptance. These miners are not suppliants; they are conquerors. A species of latent idealism animates their every movement. They rejoice in labour well performed. As they themselves say, " Work and the Walloon are friends," and it is this note that Meunier strove to sound. A visionary as well as an observer, he perhaps unconsciously made man broad and universal rather than narrow and individual. His art is the deification of work. Still, while he modified life, he did not falsify life. He simply gave these stalwart man-gods a touch more heroism, a shade more of that sombre, restrained splendour with which they are clothed. An august majesty accompanies each gesture. Work with them has become a solemn, physical ritual. ' The Sower ' is biblical, ' The Butcher ' sacrificial, and that dark line of homeward-swinging figures in ' Returning from the

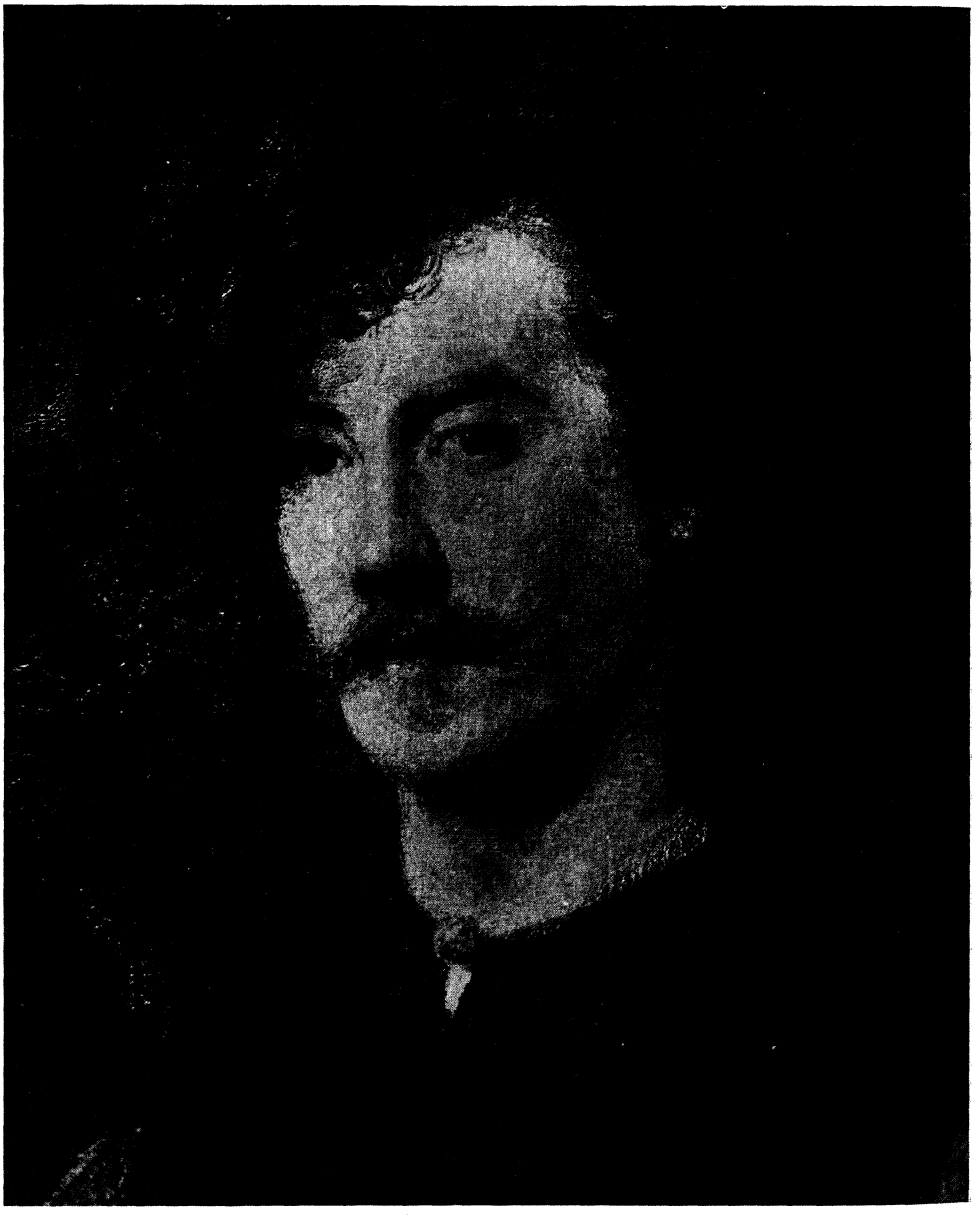
Mine ' suggests a great recessional of labour. It is not the bare performance of a given task which this art expresses, but the eternal continuity of corporate endeavour. These men are not building for to-day alone. With each stroke they are strengthening the solidarity of the human race.

It was inevitable that these modern Atlantes, who seem in truth to bear upon their shoulders the entire industrial fabric of to-day, should have moved in triumph from city to city, and that their modest, reticent sponsor should have shared their glory. Although for years his existence had been dark and stressful the twilight of Meunier's life was suffused with peace and benignity. When at length he had a home which he could call his own he used to say, with touching relief, " I am not afraid now when the door-bell rings," knowing that there was no further danger of visits from creditor or bailiff. Yet the spectre of poverty and want was hard to dismiss from his mind. Worn and almost decrepit he would often, in Paris or elsewhere, walk long distances, forgetting he had sufficient money to take a cab whenever he wished. While a constant sufferer from heart-trouble, Meunier laboured on with Spartan persistence. Though he had grown morose and irascible toward the last there was, on the whole, a gentle serenity about those few, lingering weeks. The studio was situated in a quiet suburb. Round about was the green of springtime, the brightness of the sun. Pigeons cooed under the eaves, birds carolled in the tree-tops and from across the way floated snatches of song. With that singular fitness and consistency which had characterized his entire career Meunier died on the very month and in the city of his birth. All day Monday, 3 April 1905, he spent working on the figure of ' Fecundity ' for the base of the Zola monument. He retired early, rested well, and by seven the following morning had started for the studio when he was seized with a spasm of suffocation and expired peacefully in

the arms of his daughter and his closest friend, the landscape-painter, Isidore Verheyden.

As he strolled through the busy squares of Brussels or along the dim by-streets of Louvain, there always seemed to be something evangelical about Constantin Meunier. He was tall, with massive head, deep-set grey eyes, and brow furrowed with ceaseless effort and anxiety. His form was bent as by some heavy weight, and a full, apostolic beard covered chin and chest. His arms were uncommonly long and his movements measured and sweeping; he might have been made only of nerves and bone. As a rule he was silent and reserved, speaking seldom and to the point. Meunier was in no degree a student, preferring, after a fatiguing day's modelling, to sit quietly within the ever narrowing family circle. Painting and music were among the few subjects he cared to discuss. Beethoven and the Italian Primitives he revered, though he had scant patience with the false sentiment of Raphael or the carnal exuberance of Rubens. Throughout his life and the work of his hands flowed a deep and tremulous sympathy. He always felt the sense of tears in human things. His art, like the man himself, is profoundly fraternal. It seems to palpitate with the benediction, the caress, of a divine pity—that pity which came into the world long since and which made the world anew.

JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER



JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

Portrait of the artist by Fantin-Latour

[*Collection of the late Samuel P. Avery; courtesy of Sam. P. Avery, Esq.*]

JAMES McNEILL WHISTLER

IT was inevitable that the teeming world of actuality claimed with such gusto by Gustave Courbet and the men of the mid-century should not appeal with uniform zest to all minds. Although with stimulating enthusiasm the progressive spirits of the day forsook the legendary and the classic and forswore the brown tone of the galleries, each found in nature something different. The sum of creative endeavour was not diminished, it was turned into broader channels. It spread itself over a visible land of fact instead of invisible regions of myth or fable. Fresh points of view and new objects of interest were encountered at every turn. Before long the wholesale realism preached by the boisterous, bull-necked peasant of Ornans gave place to a selective realism, to a choice based solely upon individual predilection. From the common soil of universal acceptance sprang in due course the flowers of personal caprice. By a natural process of development the principle of aristocracy reasserted itself. As it chanced, the most aristocratic, the most capricious, and the most personal of these selective realists did not come from France, where tradition was still covertly worshipped even by the younger painters, but from overseas where tradition was unknown. Like Courbet alone, who had arrived unprejudiced from Franche-Comté to devote himself to the law, James McNeill Whistler was no respecter of precedent, nor had he any cause to be. In point of fact his equipment was typically American and

national. The inquisitiveness, the independence, and the seeming irreverence of his nature were his by right of birth. Endowed with finely attuned aesthetic perceptions and an unfailing sense of style he was free to devote his gifts to whatever subject he saw fit. Though it was his good fortune to have joined that gallant little band of reformers which included Manet, Fantin-Latour, Bonvin, Bracquemond, and Legros it is more than likely that Whistler would have developed alone. Nothing was able to keep him from his favourite themes. While the gentle Fantin gathered strength from the grave masters of the past Whistler wandered observantly about the streets. He went to the Louvre a few times and made the customary copies, yet he much preferred stopping at the pension in the rue Dauphine where they all took their meals and using 'Bibi Lalouette' for a model. Later on not a few of his contemporaries were amazed at the spectacle of this young patrician of art pausing before a fishstall or a sweetshop and sketching an old dame or a group of ragged children. Although his aim appeared perverse and paradoxical it was logical and consistent. He was merely exercising the divine privilege of every man to depict the humble and the lowly, to see beauty in all things here below.

Let us for the moment put aside all previous ideas of Whistler. Let us forget the vapid stories, grotesque theories, and clumsy misconceptions with which he has so long been surrounded. It is time for his work to speak for itself in its own subtle and persuasive language. It is enough if he stand there in the dim studio prompting now and again, or pointing the way as he might once have done with his unclouded clarity and enthusiasm. Why has this man who took such deliberate pains to explain himself remained a puzzle, and an enigma? How is it possible that he should have eluded not only an impertinent public, but his friends and disciples as well? Why does he

always retreat nimbly as you advance, gliding farther and farther into the distance just as his portraits seem to dissolve into their vague backgrounds, their matchless envelope of mystery? The answer is simplicity itself. It lies in the fact that Whistler is usually approached from without instead of from within. Nothing could be more dissimilar than the Whistler of tradition and the Whistler of truth. Stripped of all that has been foisted upon them of specious and foreign, of malicious or frivolous, the man and his art shine forth in spontaneous unity. Instead of being a clever mountebank, he was a mystic and a martyr. Instead of being careless and inconsequent he was one of the most scrupulous incarnations of the aesthetic conscience ever known. It is marvellous how this slender, tenuous creature survived those years of opposition and obloquy, and that subsequent period of adulation and overpraise. He succeeded in doing so only because his was the life of the spirit, because in a measure he possessed the austerity of Emerson, the self-detachment of Swedenborg. You will doubtless contend that this sounds ecstatic. You may find it difficult to associate such ideas with the Whistler of convention, the nonchalant Whistler whose very existence seemed so heedless, and who left behind so much that appears transitory or incomplete. Yet in the interest of verity let us judge this eager, zealous being according to his own standards. Let us measure him by his own accomplishment.

No man in the history of graphic expression has excelled James McNeill Whistler in that sensitiveness to optical impressions which alone constitutes the born painter, and none presents a more consistent example of artistic purification. He was above all a specialist in the real. With the gates of the universe standing ajar he stepped in and chose only those few things which suited his particular taste and temperament. From the outset his practice was to eliminate, to simplify. He

began with rich, almost robust qualities. He loved form, colour, and contour for their own sake, yet one by one he renounced what are commonly deemed the essentials of pictorial representation. Little by little his art became fastidious and evanescent, the merest phantom suggestion of fact. Both in landscape and in his treatment of the figure it passed through a continual process of etherealization. Do those later portraits, lingering far back in their dull gold frames, depict actual men and women, or are they eloquent, disembodied souls? Are these vapoury nocturnes bits of Venice and the Thames, or are they but the magic record of vagrant impressions? Is this suppressed radiance the glow of nature or the powdered dust blown from fairy butterfly wings? You cannot frame a valid reply without bearing in mind the fact that, though Whistler began a realist, he ended a spiritist, that what he achieved is the purest alchemy of art. Let us then follow him from those early Paris days, when he saw so lucidly and so joyously, to the deepening twilight of that last quiescent hour in Chelsea when all he had seen and dreamed melted into the great, encircling infinity.

With an instinctive feeling that such details in themselves signify little, Whistler adroitly rebuffed the prying nobodies who delved into his antecedents and youthful associations. He had changed his name, therefore he reserved the right to shift at will the date and place of his birth. From the beginning he displayed an imperious contempt for externals. It was the idea which attracted him, seldom the fact. When, after a whimsical militant experience, he found himself in the French capital, it was the theory of realism which he espoused rather than its practice. It is true that under the direct inspiration of Rembrandt he painted certain vigorous portraits including those of 'La Mère Gérard' and the one of himself with the hat, which recall the sober Dutchman's frank energy and heavy, oily pal-

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HARMONY IN GREEN AND ROSE—THE MUSIC ROOM

By James McNeill Whistler

[*Courtesy of Colonel Frank J. Hecker*]

ette. It is equally obvious that Courbet is reflected in various coast scenes, and Manet in his 'Thames in Ice,' yet these phases were transient and bore little relation to his subsequent work. Though, attracted by the man's expansive vitality, he spent a summer or so with Courbet, his real friend and counsellor was Fantin, the modest visionary who gazed at young girls reading or embroidering, at the whole subdued intimacy of daily life, through the most pervasive soul-film art had thus far known. There was a distinct mental as well as artistic sympathy between the two men. Though Whistler shortly crossed the Channel, the influence of Fantin persisted, subtly helping him to paint his 'At the Piano' so full of rich yet quiet tonality, so infused with the permeating limpidity of atmosphere, the beauty of sentiment, and the suggestion of softly played melody. From Fantin, too, perhaps came the idea of characterizing in terms of music those later and still more insinuating harmonies and symphonies, for Fantin was himself already dreaming of transposing to black and white the throbbing utterances of Wagner, Schumann, Brahms, and Berlioz. The entire influence of Fantin was in the direction of a rhythmic eloquence, a psychic radiation through which were to emerge the plastic shapes of an ever present spirit world. It is significant to note how, long after he had settled in London, Whistler turned to Fantin for sympathy and encouragement. Although he had achieved relative success it had not been without corresponding effort. "Tu-sais," he wrote, "combien j'ai de la patience et combien je ne quitte jamais ce que j'ai commencé." He had passed but a couple of years in Gleyre's studio, and often lamented his lack of systematic training. "Ah! Fantin," he again writes with endearing humility, "je sais si peu! les choses ne vont pas vite!" Surely this is not the arrogant, assertive Whistler of popular imagination.

While he made numerous experiments there were two works of his formative period which unmistakably marked the Whistler of the future. They were a little unfinished etching entitled 'Isle de la Cité,' and 'The White Girl,' which was the feature of that memorable Salon des Refusés which witnessed the triumph of the new over the old, of the rejected over the accepted. The elusive quality of the later etchings and the deliberately symphonic arrangement of the later portraits were each there in embryo. It only required an increasing regard for beauty of space instead of beauty of line in the one case, and a more restrained psychic mastery in the other, in order to effect the transformation. Meantime nothing was sacrificed to a hasty, ill-prepared onward march. He was still to imitate with needle the light and shade of his great Amsterdam predecessor in such plates as 'The Kitchen' and 'La Vieille aux Loques,' and to trace with frank crispness and force the countenances of 'Becquet' and 'Drouet,' as well as his own youthful head crowned with masses of rebellious hair. The clarity of vision and surety of hand increased, even, when he left the by-streets of Paris for the Thames-side, where humanity was subordinated to those views of wharves and warehouses, swaying masts and tall chimneys standing sharp against the sky which characterize river life below bridge. Yet just as he rarely, for intensity of colour or movement, duplicated the vividness and sweeping vigour of 'The Blue Wave' breaking on the shore of Biarritz, so he never again attempted the accurate tracery of 'Billingsgate' or 'Black Lion Wharf.' They are unique, these plates, in the field of etching. Never have needle and copper surface been used with such skill in order to express nature's baffling intricacy. The particular appeal of these subjects lay in their sprightly, casual verity. Nowhere was there the least attempt to prettify a scene or to provoke sentiments other than aesthetic. They exalted the incidental, the indiffer-

ent. They surprised charm in a bargee sitting in his scow, in a dog straying across the street. They were all enchanting in their unpoetical poetry.

Years later in Venice when he turns to etching again after those tender, pensive dry-points of the Leyland sisters, of 'Weary,' and 'Reading,' Whistler is a different man. He has ceased to care for the same effects. That definition of outline which was the triumph of the earlier work has vanished. You cannot put your finger on the walls or crumbling cornices of these palaces along the Grand Canal. They appear before you iridescent and ephemeral, or stretch in thin lines across the distant horizon. You never see figures at close range as the two rivermen puffing their clay pipes in 'Rotherthithe.' Infinitesimal specks of personality flit by the Riva; gondolas glide to and fro in the twilight; here rises a campanile, there looms a slender mast or the bulbous dome of La Salute; all is magical in its freedom, its feather lightness of touch. With refreshing independence he ignores the Venice of convention, the Venice of Canaletto, and of Turner, and goes about ferreting out odd bits full of tattered individuality. Now and then you pause before an entranceway or glance into a garden or courtyard, merely the better to grasp the contrasting vagueness and remote, illusory splendour of the Water City. Do not imagine, however, because Whistler transcribed less at each stage of his development, that he saw less, that his powers of observation in any degree abated. The truth is he kept discerning more and more. He discovered nuances which were indescribably difficult to perceive, and these he recorded with equal assurance and vivacity. He was not etching in the customary painstaking manner of the linearist, he was literally painting on copper. With each step forward he acquired increased facility and increased precision of pattern. He was accomplishing, in fact, with his etcher's needle just what certain simpler folk near by were

doing. He was attaining the dexterity of those lace-makers he must often have seen bending over their frames in sunlit doorway or seated by a quiet window. His art had become the slenderest of filaments.

The Whistler of the etchings, lithographs, and pastels will always remain the Whistler for those of attenuated preferences. It is the creator of the 'Mother,' 'Carlyle,' 'Rosa Corder,' and 'Miss Alexander' who attracts broader, more diverse minds. In painting he passed through the same process of renunciation as in the strictly graphic arts. During the period when he was feeling his way with almost tragic earnestness he was not above accepting assistance from the outside, and considering his lack of serious training it could hardly have been otherwise. Behind the tremulous aspiration of 'At the Piano,' Fantin, as we know, nods in grateful recognition and approval. Beside 'The White Girl' and the 'Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine' lingers the luxuriantly sensuous Rossetti, while over those two maidens in a 'Symphony in White, No. 3' Albert Moore has cast a spell of that same classic immobility and mellowness which was wafted from the shores of Sicily and the isles of the Aegean. From print and shop front he caught bewitching glimpses of Japan, and in the Louvre stood reverently before the sweeping line and silver-grey vibrancy of Velázquez. Each separate factor contributed to his approaching maturity. He selected this, he assimilated that, fusing all into his inherently personal and exclusive vision. Yet it was only the least hint that he required in order to go farther in certain directions than anyone had gone. He took little indeed considering what he gave in return.

Nothing is more illuminating than to watch how, through an almost frenzied self-chastisement, he attained the spiritual height and artistic restraint of the 'Mother' and the 'Carlyle'

HARMONY IN GREY AND GREEN—PORTRAIT OF CICELY HENRIETTA, MISS ALEXANDER

By James McNeill Whistler

[*Courtesy of W. C. Alexander, Esq.*]

portraits. It was not long before he shrank in disgust from the emphatic impasto of the Dutchmen and the truculence of Courbet. His colouring became more fluid, more volatile, and less positive. He left behind without a sign of regret the rose-tinted azaleas clustering beside his 'Little White Girl' and the bright, full-keyed brilliance of 'The Music Room' with its refined, instantaneous figures, shaded reading-lamp, flowered chintz curtains, and porcelain vase reflected in the clear mirror. It was doubtless with somewhat easier conscience that he forsook such complicated Japanese arrangements as 'Die Lange Leizen, of the Six Marks,' 'The Golden Screen,' and 'The Balcony,' which could scarcely have meant more to him than studies in decorative distribution. Nor was it long before he maintained that 'The Balcony' as well as his 'Princesse du Pays de la Porcelaine' incased in her blue and gold Peacock Room were wrong in principle;—"Too much elaborated," he insisted, "not nearly simple enough." Only once, in 'The Music Room,' did he give a carefully externalized transcription of fact, for 'The Balcony' on which these fantastic dolls are grouped was but the balcony of his own house. He did not even add an imaginary profile of Fuji towering in the distance, but let us see the winding river with its dimly outlined warehouses and scattered shipping. And after all it mattered little, for he soon cleansed himself of an exotic orientalism. He soon began to rely upon his own infinitely more precious heritage, to express things in their briefest terms, to paint as it were with the penetrant intensity of thought alone.

It was not through gifts wholly artistic that Whistler was able to conceive the 'Mother' and the 'Carlyle.' It was also by grace of qualities fundamentally intellectual and spiritual. The basis of the man's nature was moral, and the moral instinct had gradually become merged into the aesthetic. In all matters he was a purist. His numerous quarrels were questions of

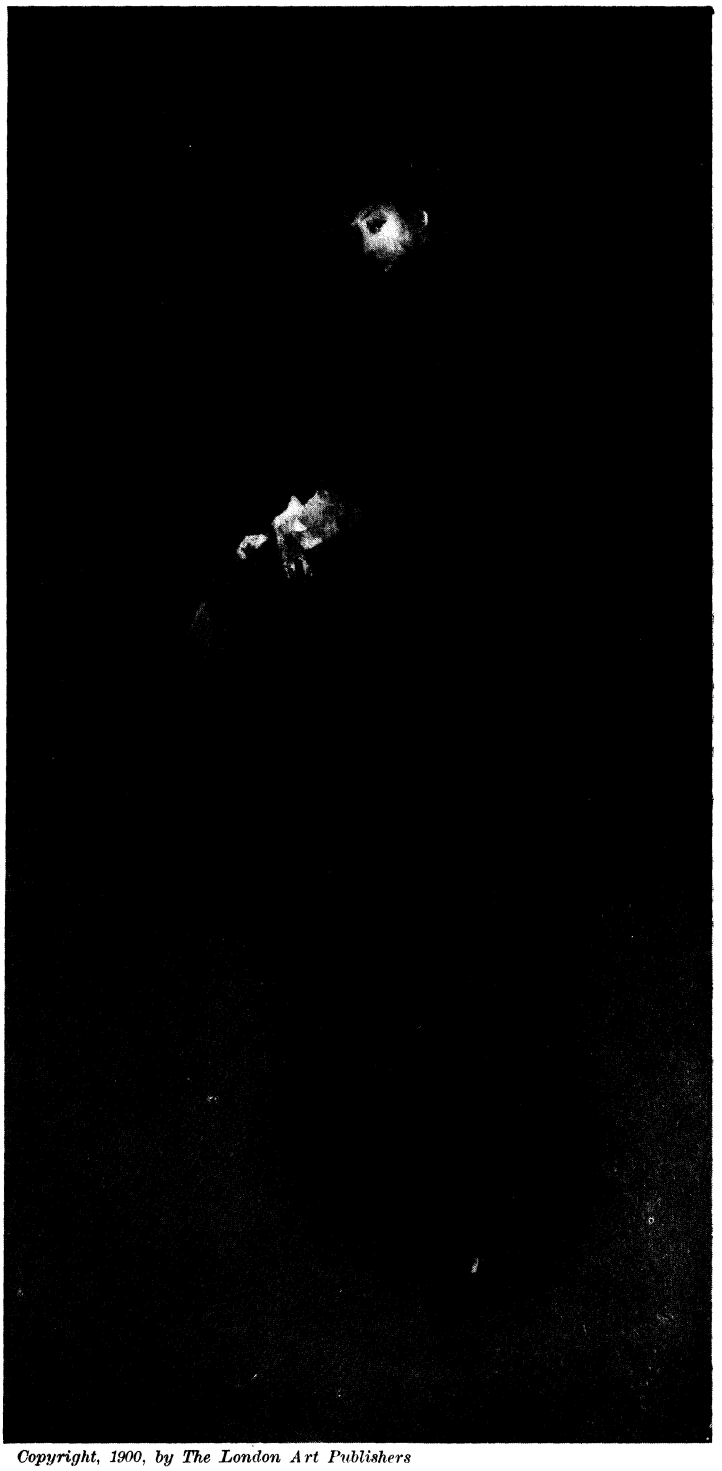
principle, not the splenetic vagaries of a tantalizing egotist. Art was his religion, and for his artistic faith he was prepared to make any sacrifice. In his inimitable fashion, yet with deep sincerity, he formulated his own Ten Commandments, his own Tables of the Law. You cannot gaze at these two canvases without feeling that they represent a fusion of morality and mentality exceptional in the annals of art. The abstract reasoning of his engineer-mathematician father and the piety of his mother were curiously blended in Whistler's making. The 'Mother' seated in that subdued room, her hands folded, her eyes fixed upon the invisible, is more than an 'Arrangement in Grey and Black,' more even, than an adagio of old age. She belongs to the epoch of the transcendentalists. She is the incarnation of that religious mysticism which had crossed the ocean years before to find a new home in a new land. It is easy to imagine her having written in her diary during that diverting St. Petersburg period after her sons had been up late the night before watching the illuminations;—"My boys did not take their breakfast till noon Friday; this is surely not keeping the straight and narrow way." Although puzzled at times in after years she must have felt that her "darling Jimmie" was, despite all, keeping with precision the straight and narrow way. She at any rate had the satisfaction of knowing that during her lifetime he seldom touched brush or canvas on Sundays. When asked once why he did not work on the first day of the week he replied simply;—"Because I promised my mother I would not." It is true that he prided himself on being a debonair Continental. In point of fact he was American, and Puritan, to the heart's core.

You will as readily agree that no one who was not himself something of a Covenanter could have painted the 'Carlyle' as you will that no one whose sympathies were not of the most exquisite fibre could have revealed to us little 'Miss Cicely Hen-

rietta Alexander ' waiting there in delicate white and grey, a black bow in her hat, a black ribbon in her hair, a pair of butterflies flitting above her head and a spray of daisies peeping out beside her. Nothing Whistler has ever done quite approaches this gracious, hesitant apparition. The foremost galleries of the world can show nothing more lovely, more appealing, or more sensitive. All he had been striving for was there at last. All he had written to Fantin in despair of achieving had been achieved. With a line as sure as that of Velázquez, and a surface as smooth as the finest lacquer, he imprisoned at the moment and for all time this modern Infanta, this slender slip of latter-day culture and civilization. While the ' Mother ' and the ' Carlyle ' mark the climax of his austerity of statement, ' Miss Alexander ' pauses wistfully on the threshold of this kingdom where actuality was almost to attain the vanishing point. She suggests, in a sense, both prophecy and regret. Perhaps she is even pleading with the painter not to venture farther into shadowland. However that may be, he was not to heed her unconscious warning. Never again do we see such pearl-like luminosity of tone and such caressing certainty of contour. Black, the universal harmonizer, herewith begins to spread its sombre, aristocratic allure over figure and background. Henceforth we move silently into a realm of half lights, of suggested colour, and undefined form. Mutely resigned, ' Rosa Corder ' stands tall and impassive, her plumed hat hanging at her side, her body turned more than half around —black, in an atmosphere almost as black. Slipping on her glove ready to depart, ' Lady Archibald Campbell ' smiles enigmatically as she beckons us into the enfolding gloom. Amid lyric nothingness ' Comte Robert de Montesquiou-Fezensac ' recites verses faintly articulate, while from the near-by music room float the strains of ' Sarasate's ' violin. They are children of the mind and creatures of the nerves, these beautiful,

impalpable beings. They are but inventories of personality. Resemblance counts for little, yet each is sufficiently individualized, each vibrates with life and truth, a truth less physical, however, than psychic. As you glance from one to another the body appears to recede, the soul to glide forward, inviting confidence and understanding. So fluid and incorporeal are they in substance that they seem, one and all, to live, move, and have their being in liquid air.

On approaching the final phase of Whistler's work it is necessary to renounce all preconceptions of painting. Subject, direct, or even approximate transcription of nature, and what is called incident, rapidly disappear. A chance mood, a casual impression, an evasive allusion, these are all that remain. Along the river-bank in ' Pink and Grey—Chelsea ' pass and repass vague, detached silhouettes. A few scattered, spectral figures stroll about the ' Cremorne Gardens ' listening to the music and watching the flicker of countless lights; but soon you are alone with nought save the mystery and the magic of night. Still this turquoise-blue immensity is never quite without its note of contrast, its touch of emotional relief. You can hear long waves breaking on the shore, see the gleam from ships riding softly at anchor, or watch for an instant the suspended incandescence of a bursting rocket. Here again no one has attempted effects so illusive. As a painter of night he never had a rival save perhaps Hiroshige. It is only when you consider the penetration of sight and deftness of stroke which this art exacts that you begin to understand what a consummate craftsman Whistler was. Nothing could baffle him. Nothing could elude his refinement of perception and his supreme ease of presentation. It is precisely because it was Whistler's constant aim to immaterialize painting that he was able to get closer and closer to the hidden secrets of nature. Faint and delicate as these little panels are they are vital fragments of the great, pul-



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THE LADY WITH THE YELLOW BUSKIN—PORTRAIT OF LADY ARCHIBALD CAMPBELL

By James McNeill Whistler

[*Wilstach Gallery, Memorial Hall, Philadelphia*]

sating world-process. They are not bits of still-life. They are the breath of the infinite.

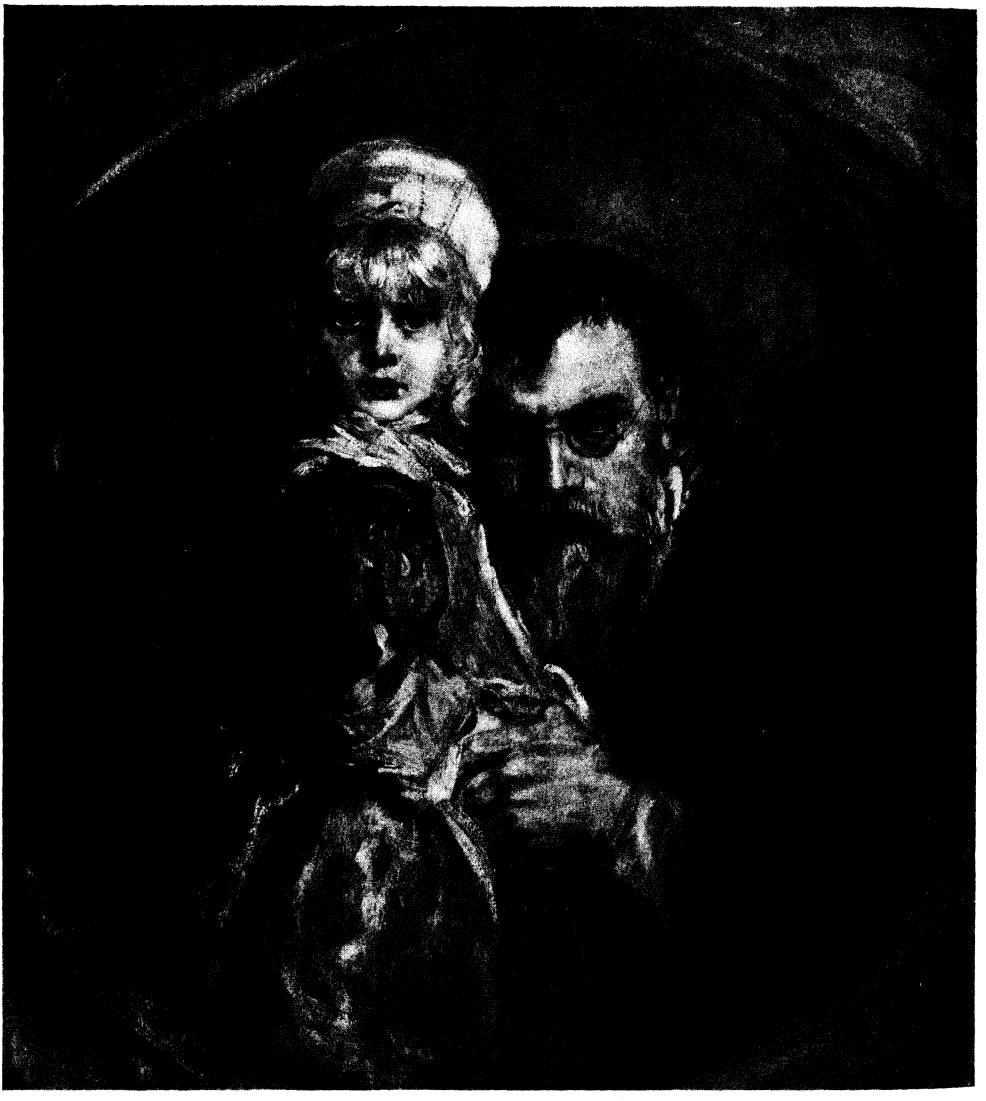
Reviewing in turn this succession of nocturnes, harmonies, symphonies, and arrangements, so full of suppressed colour and almost audible melody, so intangible, so subliminal, it is difficult not to feel that Whistler must have enlisted qualities hitherto unknown to painting. Instinctively you recall the stories of Poe, of which the artist was so fond. Spontaneously the memory travels back to those early London days, and to the tiny cottage in Walham Green where he used to busy himself with table-turning and spirit-rapping or sit up all night with Rossetti discussing things which lay across the borderland of knowledge. With inexorable logic he passed through the three phases of observation, interpretation, and suggestion. That hypnotic faculty which was apparent long ago in ' The White Girl,' who stands as though entranced upon an outstretched wolf skin, increased rather than diminished as time went on. Only in rare instances has he used more than one figure, for he soon came to realize that a psychic state can best be concentrated in a single object. His habits were abstemious, his nature was ascetic, and as he drifted through the increasing years he put aside all that appeals to the lust of the eye and the pride of life. He grew indifferent to the pageant of external brilliancy round about him. He came to see everything through the grey fogs of London and the veiled mists of the brain. As he pressed lightly and eagerly forward he simply jotted down what he found in this uncharted land. Out of the encroaching darkness he rescued a few faces, a few vague shadowgraphs. Bloodless, almost formless, deprived of all save the bare consciousness of identity, his phantom portraits haunt the mind with cruel persistence. An indefinable pathos enshrouds each character. They do not move. They stand gazing plaintively at the unseen. Are they sad because they have been banished from the

bright, throbbing existence which they once knew—because, though finding their own salvation, they have lost the whole world?

It has occurred to many that the painter may have made too great a sacrifice in the attainment of an abstract, impersonal art. The thought is immature, for he could not have done other than he has done. He was impelled by the law of his being to follow the course marked out for him to its inevitable conclusion. It is easy to maintain that these arabesques which he so fluently traced are isolated and lacking in human application. Yet it must be remembered that their author possessed something of that inhumanity which is the bitter portion of all idealists, and that heredity imprints its insignia alike upon the world of beauty as upon the world of biology. Only in its early phases was this art in any degree healthy or joyous. In its final stages it was clearly the product of a species of emotional erethismus. It was Whistler's fond assumption that he had succeeded in establishing a definite parallelism between painting and music. The idea was not original with him, it had already fascinated numerous minds, and though he came closer to its solution than any one, the problem remains unsolved and insoluble. That which he did accomplish was the legitimate conquest of fresh territory for his own particular medium. The battle-cry of "Vive la Nature!" which rang inspiringly throughout the stressful years of the nineteenth century closes diminuendo, in a whisper, almost, with the contribution of James McNeill Whistler. The cherished traditions of former times have vanished as in the night. Painting has here ceased to depict the glories of the past or the insistent realties of the present. It appeals no longer to the imagination, to sentiment, or to the intellect. It plays directly upon the nerves, the chief possession, or affliction, of these restless modern days. You may not fancy a universe stripped of all save a series of psychic ema-

nations. You may not relish this power which art has so lately and so dearly won. It is none the less impossible to hold that Whistler's work is ever wanting in sheer beauty or persuasive evocation. And above all it is impossible not to realize that before he passed away that lingering summer afternoon he had with his sensitive, nervous fingers unlocked a new and secret chamber of the soul.

FRANZ VON LENBACH



FATHER AND CHILD

Portrait of Franz von Lenbach and his daughter Marion, by the artist

[*Possession of the Lenbach family, Munich*]

FRANZ VON LENBACH

DURING the past generation the eyes of the world have for more reasons than one been turned toward Germany. Whether viewed with admiration or with apprehension Teutonic ascendency is rapidly becoming a possibility. Few countries have boasted a similar combination of political, intellectual, and economic progress as that which has marked Germany's onward march since the Franco-Prussian war. On lines laid down by the Iron Chancellor, and modified by circumstance, the various independent states have been welded into a single empire and advancement in every direction has been assured. Little by little the imperial idea, the idea of national unity, and the idea of world power, if not world supremacy, have carried all before them. It has become necessary, within the past few years, to revise the conventional opinion of Germany and of the German, for fundamental changes have taken place in both. The flow of gold from across the frontier has inflated public pride as well as the public purse. The sentimentalist and the metaphysician have been superseded by the clear-headed, energetic utilitarian. Romance has been discarded for reality, and everywhere is visible that regulation of human activity which has produced such significant results. In science, in philosophy, in letters, and in art the same spirit is manifest. A magnificent system has been devised, a system upon the stability of which the future of the country reposes. That this system is invincible remains to be proved; that its sponsors be-

lieve it to be so is indisputable. It has naturally taken remarkable men in every walk of life to erect this austere temple of the will, this structure which is literally composed of blood and iron. Fortunately for the future student there exists an unexampled portrait gallery of the makers of modern Germany. Sombre and impressive, speaking the ruthless language of the present in the measured accents of the past, this series of likenesses is the work of a single individual, a painter who seemed destined by nature for the fulfillment of his particular task. Even in the field of art, so replete with exceptional personalities, Franz von Lenbach is a conspicuous figure. Everything contributed to his success. He came upon the scene at the precise moment when his presence counted for the most and used his gifts without fear or without stint. His very defects, which were not inconsiderable, redounded to his favour. He knew everyone of consequence during a long and industrious career and left behind the most comprehensive record of his time which any portrait-painter has thus far placed to his credit.

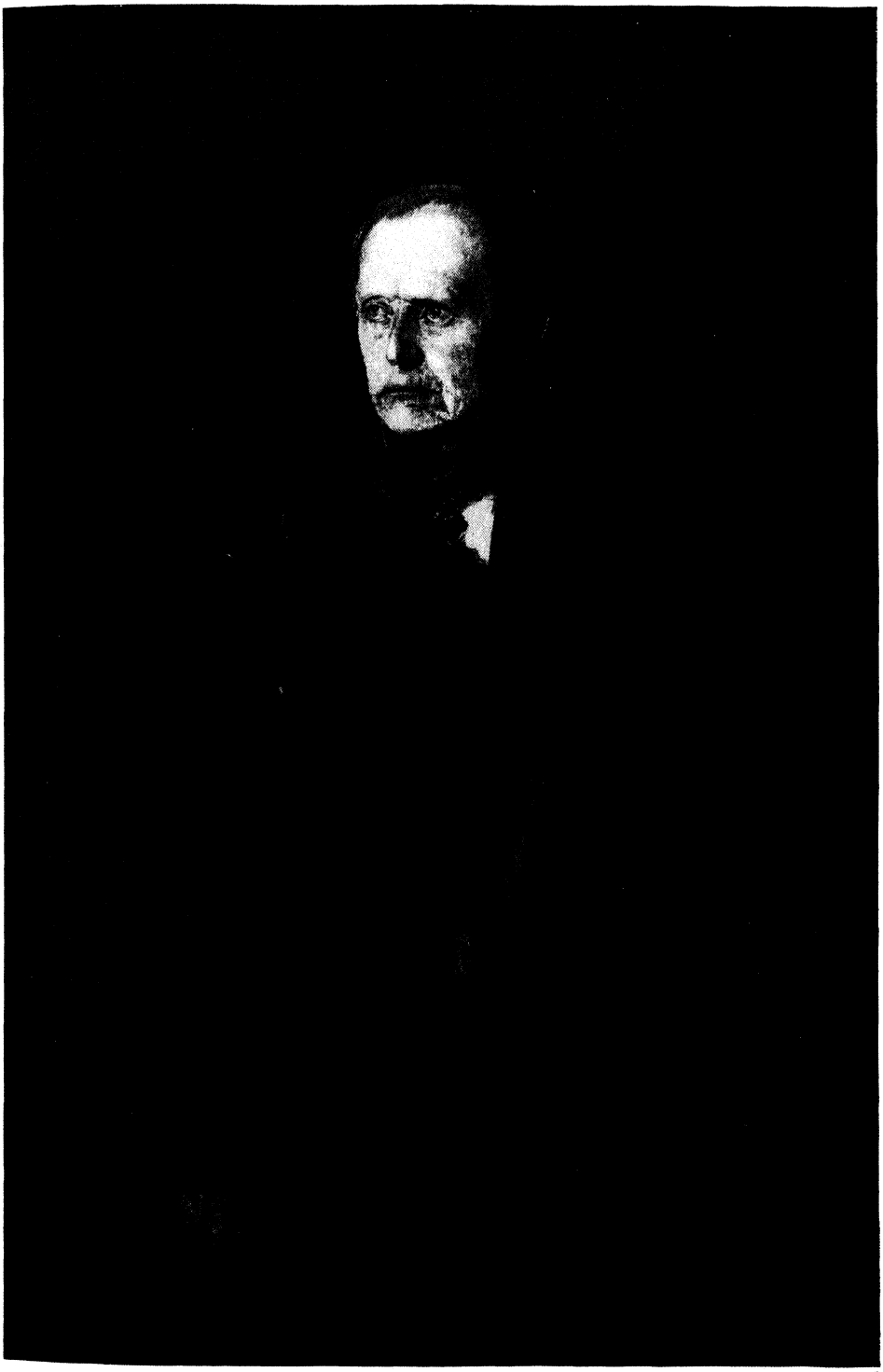
Half boor and half courtier, this aggressive son of an obscure Bavarian artisan forced his way into all classes of society and managed so closely to identify himself with the special spirit and the principal personalities of his day that he will ever remain the graphic historian of nineteenth-century German. One by one the chief actors in that world drama which witnessed the rise of one great nation and the temporary humiliation of another, were painted by the rigorous analyst to whom beauty of colour was naught and character was everything. Judged according to severe artistic standards Lenbach reveals serious shortcomings. As an interpreter of the mind his equals have been few. Notable among the merits of these solemn, momentous likenesses are their intellectual insight and their earnest dignity of intent. At his best the painter depicted each sitter with a surety of purpose and a singleness of effect which

place him among the master physiognomists. While his transcriptions of both man and woman are restricted and summary, for intensity of penetration they stand alone. From their dark backgrounds, as from the dubious unknown, these statesmen and scientists, these musicians and poets, look with compelling fixity and truth. Unlike Bonnat whose portraits are but glorified still-life, Lenbach cared little for definition of contour. No distracting details mar the simplicity of these canvases. He either could not or did not choose to catch the sheen of satin or the steel-grey of broadcloth. Costume had scant charm for one who had seen so much rich attire, so many glittering uniforms. Faces only he painted with force and vividness, the rest of the body being treated with indifference. The hands, even, are neglected, but about compressed lips and brooding brow cluster the minute, infallible indices of individuality. It is however the eyes of Lenbach's subjects which tell the final story of that which lies within, for he succeeded as few artists have ever done in making the eyes the veritable reflex of personality. He reckoned only with what he believed to be the inner consciousness, and of this gave a synthesis. Rembrandt, Moroni, and Lorenzo Lotto are here his prototypes.

In glancing over this array of portraits both national and international it is fruitless to look for intimate grace or delicate, aristocratic allure. There is, it is true, a clever semblance of such qualities, yet this big, angular creature never learned to read aright the mysteries of a woman's heart. Although he painted many of the most beautiful beings of the day, the mundane distinction and nervous dexterity of Sargent or Mehoffer were beyond his grasp. It is in his likenesses of Bismarck and of Moltke, of combative, conscience-tortured Gladstone, of doubting Döllinger, of Heyse, serene high-priest of beauty, and Böcklin, brother spirit of faun and sea-sprite, that Lenbach achieved undisputed triumphs. Man he knew and early learned

to fix upon canvas. Womanhood, and in a sense childhood, always baffled him. The feminine enigma remained to the last insoluble. Save in its beginnings the career of this large, simian creature with sandy hair, huge hands, and beetle-like brow, recalls the princely days of Titian, Rubens, and van Dyck. From a poor apprentice he placed himself on a level with the exalted ones of the earth. Devoid of any save the most rudimentary training, he nevertheless forced his contemporaries to read history, almost, through his versions of those who made history. Born in an isolated workman's cottage he lived in palaces and died in a superbly appointed villa. Franz von Lenbach's phenomenal rise in the world was due to a conjunction of two qualities—courage and opportunity. From the outset neither was lacking, nor did either ever desert him.

This painter of emperor and pope, of chancellor and field-marshal, of grande dame, great actress, or sinuous, sense-disturbing dancer, first saw light on 13 December 1836, at Schrobenhausen, an otherwise unimportant village midway between Ingoldstadt and Augsburg, some forty miles from Munich. One of seventeen children, his father promptly destined him for the paternal calling, that of a stonemason and builder, whose modest fee was one florin for drawing the plans of a peasant's cottage. With this end in view the boy was sent, at the age of eleven, to the Industrial School at Landshut where he was noted for high spirits and a mischief-loving temperament. Until his father's death Franz followed the trade of a mason, but later, through the strictest economy on the part of his family, was enabled to attend the Polytechnic Institute of Augsburg where his talents developed with singular rapidity. He studied drawing, learned the theory and practice of engraving, and above all was fascinated by the old masters in the Augsburg Museum certain of which he copied with reverent fidelity. The son of outdoor folk he was fond of spending as much time as possible in the open,



GENERAL FIELD-MARSHAL COUNT von MOLTKE

By Franz von Lenbach

[*Possession of the von Moltke family*]

and on Sundays and holidays went about sketching from nature, his companion being a young button-moulder who likewise boasted artistic aspirations. On leaving the Polytechnic he passed some years at Schrobenhausen, being much in the company of Hofner, of Aresing, a kindly, superannuated devotee of peasant life, who did much to further the lad's ambition to become a painter. The struggle was a severe one, for his early efforts brought but slender recompense and he moreover suffered from a serious affliction of the eyes. He painted both landscape and portraits, being especially attracted by the primitive types which he met along the roadway, in the fields, or at the village inn. His price per portrait was one gulden, and when he painted family groups he did not fare so badly, families in the vicinity, being, like his own, notably large.

Lenbach wavered at first between painting and sculpture, but, though his sense of form always continued strong, colour soon proved more potent than clay. Already possessing a thoughtful, reasoning mind he was full of theories as to the proper function of portraiture and was not backward about putting his theories to the test. His lifelong practice came to him early. It was when painting the youthful countenance of his brother, that, in his own words, he " suddenly realized that an artist should concentrate his mind on the work in hand, as though nothing existed in the world except the one being before him, who is unique in the universe and will never come again." All his subsequent efforts were guided by this principle of intense, exclusive concentration to which he sacrificed every other element. He ended, as he began, a man of one idea, of one ambition. Munich inevitably proved the magnet which drew him onward, and in later years he recalled with enthusiasm those fresh, dewy mornings when he used to start out barefoot to spend a few hours among the imperishable treasures of the Alte Pinakothek. At this period his sympathies were divided be-

tween the sovereign spirits of the past, chiefly Rembrandt, Titian, and Rubens, and the beauty of Upper Bavarian sky and meadow. He began something of a colourist, but gradually the brown of the galleries came to darken the brightness of his palette. From being a free child of nature—ein Natur Kind—he became a follower of precedent, an embodiment of those times before light was permitted to flood art with its throbbing lambence. Just as a profound mental concentration proved the dominant motive of each portrait, so it grew to be his unalterable conviction that "the true breath of inspiration is drawn from the old masters." As years went on he entrenched himself more and more rigidly in this belief. With the intolerance of a man of limited horizon he ruled out all else. He even regarded it as his solemn office to maintain the continuity of that august tradition which seemed in danger of being interrupted by certain disquieting modern tendencies.

After studying for a brief period with Gräfle, a pendant of the stilted and insipid Winterhalter, Lenbach came under the influence of Piloty, the most progressive figure of the Bavarian capital. To the Kunstverein Exhibition of 1857 he sent his 'Peasants taking Refuge from a Storm before the Chapel of the Virgin,' which, though condemned for its trivial realism, was nevertheless purchased for four hundred and fifty gulden. With this sum, together with a State scholarship of five hundred gulden more, Lenbach was enabled to accompany his preceptor to Rome. He did not at once succumb to the spell of ancient art, but spent several happy weeks revelling in the sunshine of the Campo Vaccino. The fruits of this Italian sojourn consisted in a number of sketches of local types and scene together with his 'Arch of Titus,' which, owing to a lack of funds, he was obliged to complete at home from the most picturesque models he could find among the Bavarian highlands. The 'Arch of Titus' and the 'Shepherd Boy' of the Schack Gal-

lery which immediately followed mark the culmination of Lenbach's naturalistic manner. From thenceforth he turned his back upon outdoor subjects and proceeded hermetically to seal himself in the galleries where no ray of light, no breath of life, could penetrate. Although his feeling for colour was always defective, and though even the critics of that indecisive period maliciously hinted that his 'Arch of Titus' must have been painted with mud and shaded with ink, Lenbach might have made his name as a pioneer realist. He was in the field before almost any of the early apostles of actuality, and, as far as it goes, the barefoot 'Shepherd Boy,' lying on his back in the bleaching sun and shading his eyes with his hand, marks a distinct point in the conquest of frank, wholesome verity.

Yet things were not to continue so. The new was to come with increasing vigour sweeping all before it—all save this last champion of the old whose isolation daily grew more conspicuous. After a year and a half as co-professor at the new Weimar Art Academy with Böcklin and Begas, Lenbach returned to Munich where the Count von Schack was so impressed with his rendering of Rubens's 'Helena Fourment' in the Alte Pinakothek, that he sent him to Italy and later to Spain in order to copy various Renaissance pictures for the Schack Gallery. He thus became by degrees a pupil of the old masters, absorbing their technique and assimilating their secrets as few artists have ever done or have ever been willing to do. His copies after Titian, Giorgione, Rubens, Velázquez, and others have never been excelled. He seemed to be a reincarnation of the past. It is almost necessary to invoke the theory of metempsychosis in order satisfactorily to explain his career. In Rome he again met the modern Titan, Böcklin, and for a time shared his studio, the two continuing those endless speculations and disputations on art matters which had begun at Weimar and which were revived later at Basle, when Lenbach, pausing en route from

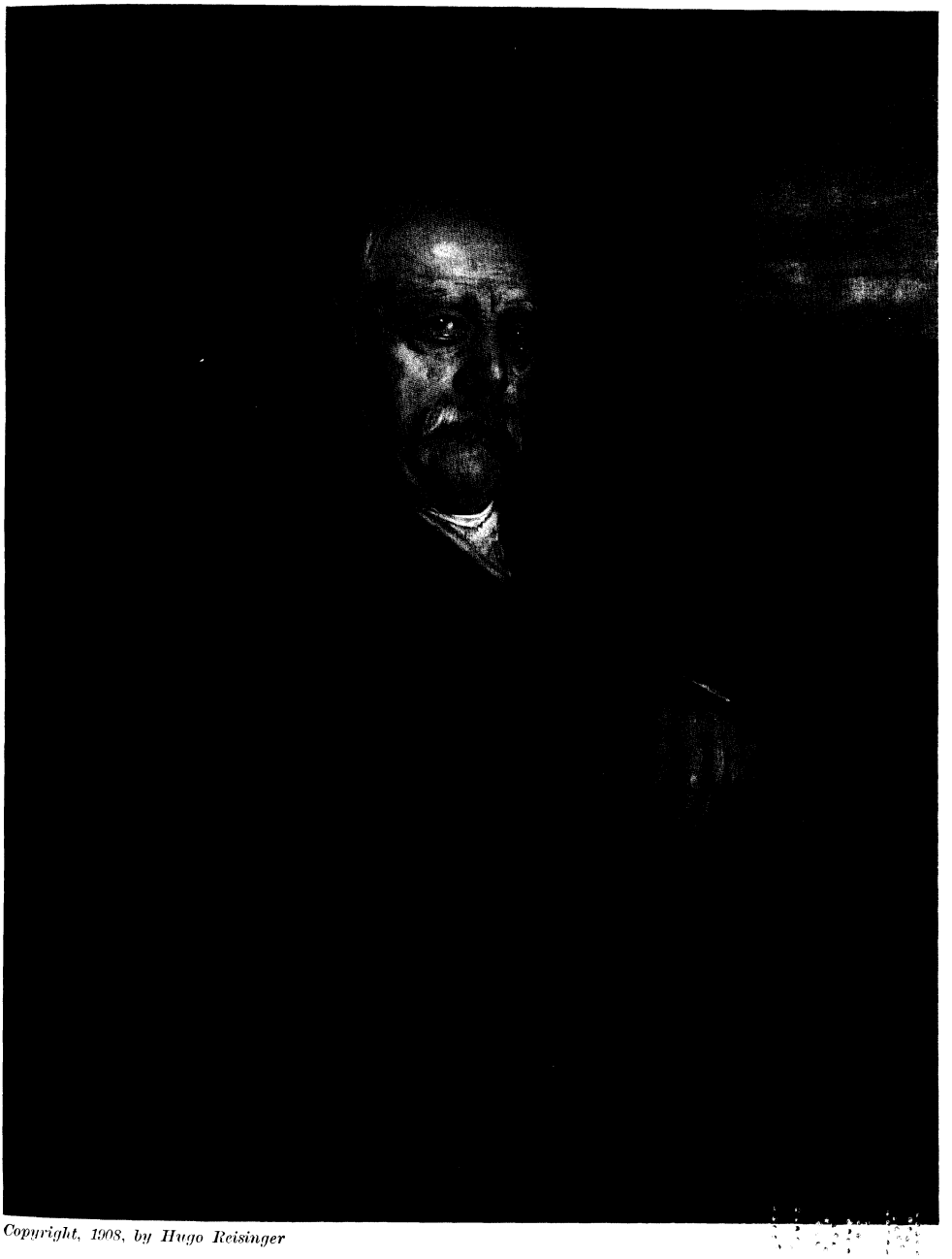
Spain, visited the lonely symbolist in his modest home. They used to talk far into the night, these two powerful creatures, emptying full bumpers thewhile, and, though their views were radically opposed, they remained close friends, Lenbach in particular admiring his Swiss colleague's original mind and incisive speech. There were, besides, numerous points of contact between the two, notably a community of origin, Lenbach's rugged father having been a mountain man from the Tyrolese border. They were both, in fact, Alpine Germans.

It was not until he had regained the Bavarian capital and resumed his acquaintance with Paul Heyse, and through him had met the Wagner circle, on the occasion of the first performance of 'Die Meistersinger,' that Lenbach devoted his energies exclusively to portraiture. From the completion of those early likenesses of Heyse and Wagner until the hour of his death he did little save place upon canvas with portentous fidelity the features of the distinguished personages he had the shrewdness to meet. Though he drifted in turn to Vienna, Berlin, Cairo, Rome, and elsewhere, Munich continued his headquarters, and it was in Munich that his friend Gabriel von Seidl later built him an elaborate Germano-Italian villa fronted by its pretty garden and fountain and filled with the varied richness of the Renaissance. At the salon of Frau von Wertheimstein in Vienna, which was the centre of the diplomatic and artistic life of the Austrian capital, Lenbach quickly made his presence felt, just as he afterward did in Berlin at the house of the Countess von Schleinitz, the queen patronne of the early Wagnerians. An almost rustic brusqueness of manner, a biting yet servile tongue, and a superb capacity for forging ahead all helped the aggressive Altbeyer to secure the most flattering commissions. He aimed high, this low-born son. He painted only those who would add lustre to his increasing list of sitters. In barely a year he was able to send fifteen portraits to the World's Ex-

PRINCE BISMARCK

By Franz von Lenbach

[*Courtesy of Hugo Reisinger, Esq.*]



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position, including those of Count and Countess Andrassy, Count Wilczek, and Princess Obrenovitch. Yet he was to go still further, for within a few months Franz Josef called him to Budapest and Kaiser Wilhelm I summoned him to Berlin, both portraits being also shown at Vienna in 1873. Although he had reached the summit of his ambition regarding the choice of models, Lenbach did not find unqualified favour with either press or public. The exalted station of his two imperial patrons clearly paralyzed his faculties, the finished pictures being manifestly weak and lacking in observation. He had not attained that assurance in the presence of royalty which afterward enabled him to lay bare the sorrow of the Old Kaiser's heart or to depict the noble simplicity of Kaiser Friedrich in white Kürassier uniform. Taste was also not sufficiently advanced to appreciate the dignified harmony of Lenbach's work. It was some time before south Germany could forget the painstaking inanities of Stieler and the Gallic imitators.

The two factors which proved Franz von Lenbach's salvation and won for him the foremost place in Teutonic portraiture were his decisive sense of character and his ability to transcribe in enduring terms the dominant figures about him, and such he did not find either in the pacific Franz Josef or in the reminiscent and rapidly declining Kaiser Wilhelm I. The Bavarian's name will always be linked with those of Bismarck and Moltke, of whom he has left so many searching and affirmative presentments. Whatever we may hear or read of these dual protagonists we must see them through the steel-blue eyes of Lenbach. As the field-marshal's inexorably effective task was accomplished first it is fitting that he should have been painted before the massive, feudal chancellor. If one typified scientific destruction, the other embodied fundamental despotism, and the former of these qualities looks from every canvas, every sketch of Moltke; the latter from each study, each drawing of Bis-

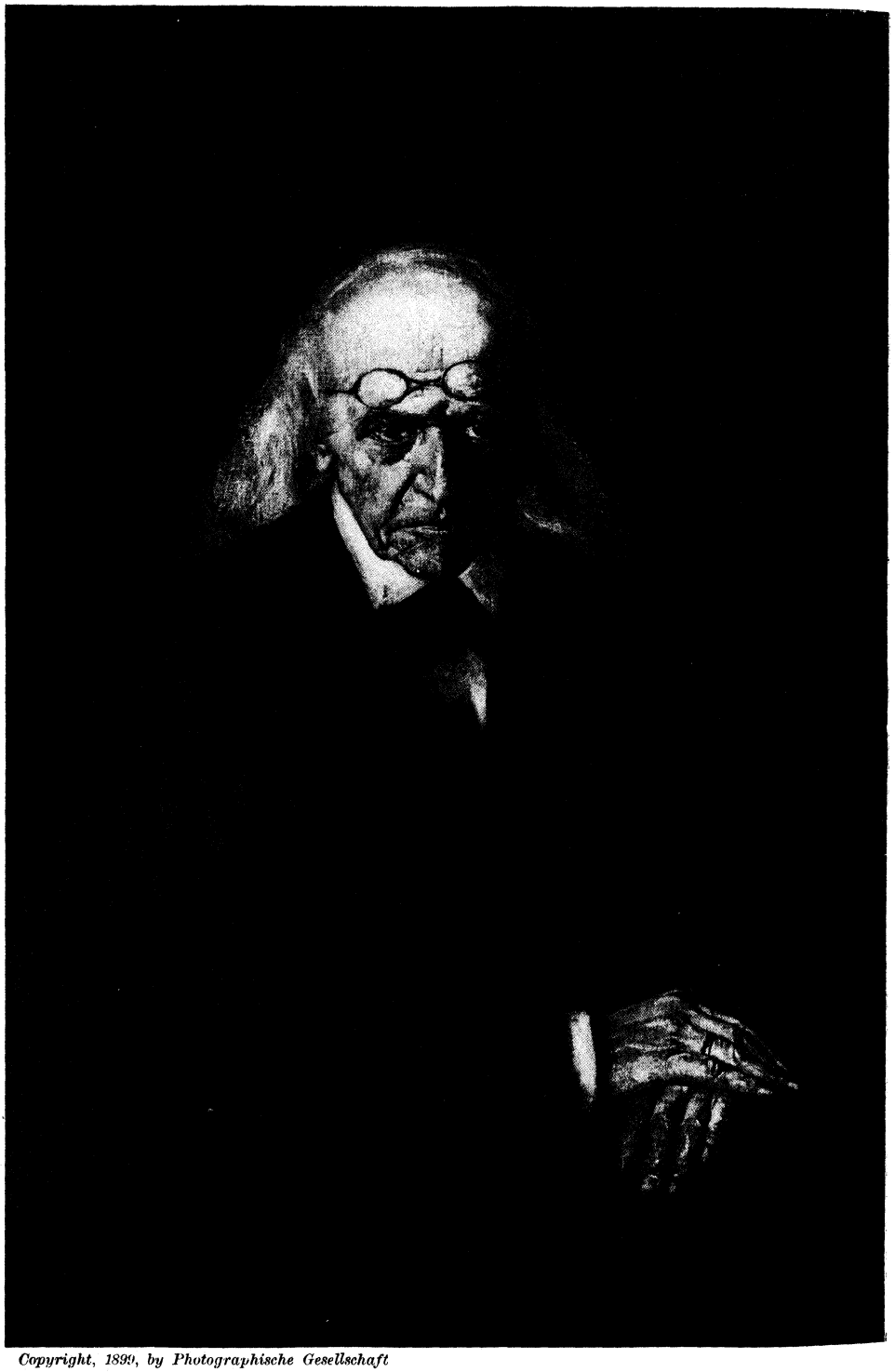
marck. It was Lenbach's habit to reduce his sitter to a mental conception, a specific word, even, and all the while he was painting to keep repeating this word over and over to himself. By this process he arrived at that unity of appeal which constitutes at once the strong and the weak feature of his work. It was a perfunctory and doctrinal programme which had come from Schopenhauer, and before him from Plato, and its application to artistic problems remains debatable. Having made Moltke's acquaintance in 1873 Lenbach proceeded to paint his idea of him as the commander incarnate, the impassive, self-contained genius of war whose results are all preordained, whose victories are all assured in advance. He visited the field-marshal several times at Kreisau and elsewhere, producing at least three unforgettable portraits. Each of these versions of the silent, passionless captain though showing the progressive stamp of age, conveys an identical impression. Von Moltke himself was not insensible to the painter's rigid method he having once impatiently exclaimed: "Why does he always seek to make a hero of me?"

Though it was through the Minghetti at Kissingen that Lenbach first met Bismarck he did not succeed in painting him until four years later, when they had renewed their acquaintance at Gastein. From 1878 until the chancellor's death twenty years after, the two were much together, Lenbach staying with the prince for long intervals at Varzin or Friedrichsruh and Bismarck once responding in kind by stopping over in Munich on his way from Vienna. Upwards of a hundred portraits and studies are the result of this intimacy, for, despite the difference in rank, such it may be termed. Bismarck being, unlike Moltke, notoriously adverse to formal sittings, Lenbach was accorded the privilege of sketching the seignorial chancellor at any time or place, even being a silent onlooker at confidential meetings of state importance. Nearly every Christmas was passed with

the Bismarck family, and on the prince's birthday in April it was the painter who was chosen to propose his health. It is thus natural that Lenbach's portraits of Bismarck, whether at the apex of his power, or as the deposed and disillusionized recluse of Friedrichsruh, should possess an humanity lacking in much of the artist's other work. During this long association the painter perhaps unconsciously put aside theory and remembered only the man who loomed before him—gigantic, primitive, beset by dreams of absolutism or mellowed by humour and paternal affection. It is a significant fact that Bismarck was pleased with these portraits, for he one day said with a sigh of relief, thinking, doubtless, of previous attempts to depict his adamantine countenance, "I am glad to see myself immortalized by Lenbach's brush; it is thus that I should wish to descend to posterity." While he was notably successful with Bismarck, it cannot be maintained that the painter was so fortunate in his delineation of Leo XIII, the prince's subtle adversary and vanquisher in the Kulturkampf which was then rending asunder Germany and the Vatican. It was in 1884, while Lenbach was living at the Palazzo Borghese, that he had his first audience with His Holiness, and the following year completed the picture which now hangs in the Neue Pinakothek. It is a pope-diplomat that he has given us, a master of statecraft rather than the spiritual father of the world, gentle and beneficent as well as resourceful in the ways of men. Lenbach was obviously more influenced by the passing issues of the day than by the permanent features of the individual he was painting. Theory had again led him astray.

Only a shade less convincing than his mighty and merciless builders of the Prussian hegemony is Lenbach's succession of Geistesheroen, or heroes of the mind and spirit, such as Döllinger, Mommsen, Helmholtz, Hammacher, Virchow, the volcanic Norse radical, Björnstjerne Björnson, and the eloquent Slav,

Strossmayer. They all gaze out of the same enshrouding penumbra; they seem, each and all, perpetual prisoners of thought. They are triumphs of pure reason. The method is realistic, but it is a philosophical, Kantian, realism. Amid endless abstractions floats a mere atom of the concrete. While they are mental masks, not portraits in the general signification of the term, for phrenological grasp and certainty of characterization they have seldom been approached. Though Lenbach will scarcely rank beside the masters he so revered, it must have been something after this fashion that Holbein limned Erasmus of Rotterdam, that Velázquez painted Pope Innocent X, and the youthful Raphael, Pope Julius II. While there is, it cannot be denied, a touch of finality about many of these likenesses which only the greatest painters have been able to attain, yet this quality has not been won without the gravest sacrifices. That which beyond everything gives these portraits their compelling tensity of expression was Lenbach's arbitrary employment of focus. Just as the ancient Egyptians before him had done, he deliberately made the eye the chief point of emphasis. All save the eye and its immediate setting belong to a vast and formless area of indefinite treatment. It was only the reality and truth with which he depicted the few features he chose to reveal that make Lenbach's art in any degree acceptable. The man's methods were characteristic. His models were posed in semi-obscurity, and from behind a pair of enormous gold-rimmed spectacles he flashed upon the sitter a piercing and reflective gaze. When absorbed he never stopped for fatigue nor failed to take infinite pains. He employed with extraordinary facility every technical resource, every trick of his craft. None of his triumphs was accidental. Nothing was left to chance. Not satisfied with human vision, he usually consulted the more accurate record of the camera. In order to arrive at what he held to be a superior fidelity to physiognomy



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THEODOR MOMMSEN

By Franz von Lenbach

[*Possession of the Mommsen family*]

he would take as many as sixty photographs of a single head in various positions, finally selecting the one which best suited his purposes and this he would enlarge and make the actual basis of his portrait. He was independent and cared little for public opinion. When reproached with his lack of external detail he would say brusquely " I leave it to the beholder to fill in what he wishes to see." Of Menzel alone he stood in awe. Referring to the lack of cordial relations between the two he once remarked, " I quarrelled years ago with Menzel; he criticizes like a shoemaker."

If it be true that Lenbach expressed most of his men in intellectual formulae, it is equally apparent that he made the majority of his women fit a preconceived type of femininity. The former are severe and introspective, the latter are usually sensuous or frivolous. While there are welcome exceptions, such as the dignified oval portrait of Freifrau von Fabrice, a clumsy coquetry and a persistent effort to simulate the charm of the English school of the eighteenth century or the morbid delicacy of Kaulbach distinguish the Bavarian's attitude toward the gentler sex. There is more attempt at elaboration in the female portraits. They possess greater exterior seduction. Almost achromatic in his men, Lenbach used a wider range of tone in his treatment of women. Yet he never handled colour with anything approaching freedom or vivacity. He was always less a colourist than a discolourist. After several years of stormy bachelorhood he had married one of these same flowers of the German noblesse, doubtless fancying he understood her, a dream which was dispelled shortly after the birth of their daughter Marion. His wife was the young Countess von Moltke, a grandniece of the field-marshal, and this patrician creature found it impossible to adjust herself to the painter's primitive ways, nor could he comprehend her innate aristocracy of feeling. They separated eventually, she marrying Bismarck's physician, Dr.

Schweninger, and he, sometimes later, resigning himself to the more comprehensive temperament of Baroness Lolo von Hornstein. Toward the last, having painted most of the grand folk of his own and other countries, he used to take the keenest delight in depicting the artless grace of his children, whom he arrayed in all manner of fancy costumes, now painting them as little princesses, now as wandering beggar musicians. He was especially fond of silver-blonde, blue-eyed Margot, whom he used to place in the arms of Duse, or other women, or hold close to his own unkempt head. Yet even here the old desire to read into nature something which was not there, or was there but vaguely, made itself manifest. Marion always seems to be gazing into the future with a shade too much divination, as though overconscious of that which is still far distant.

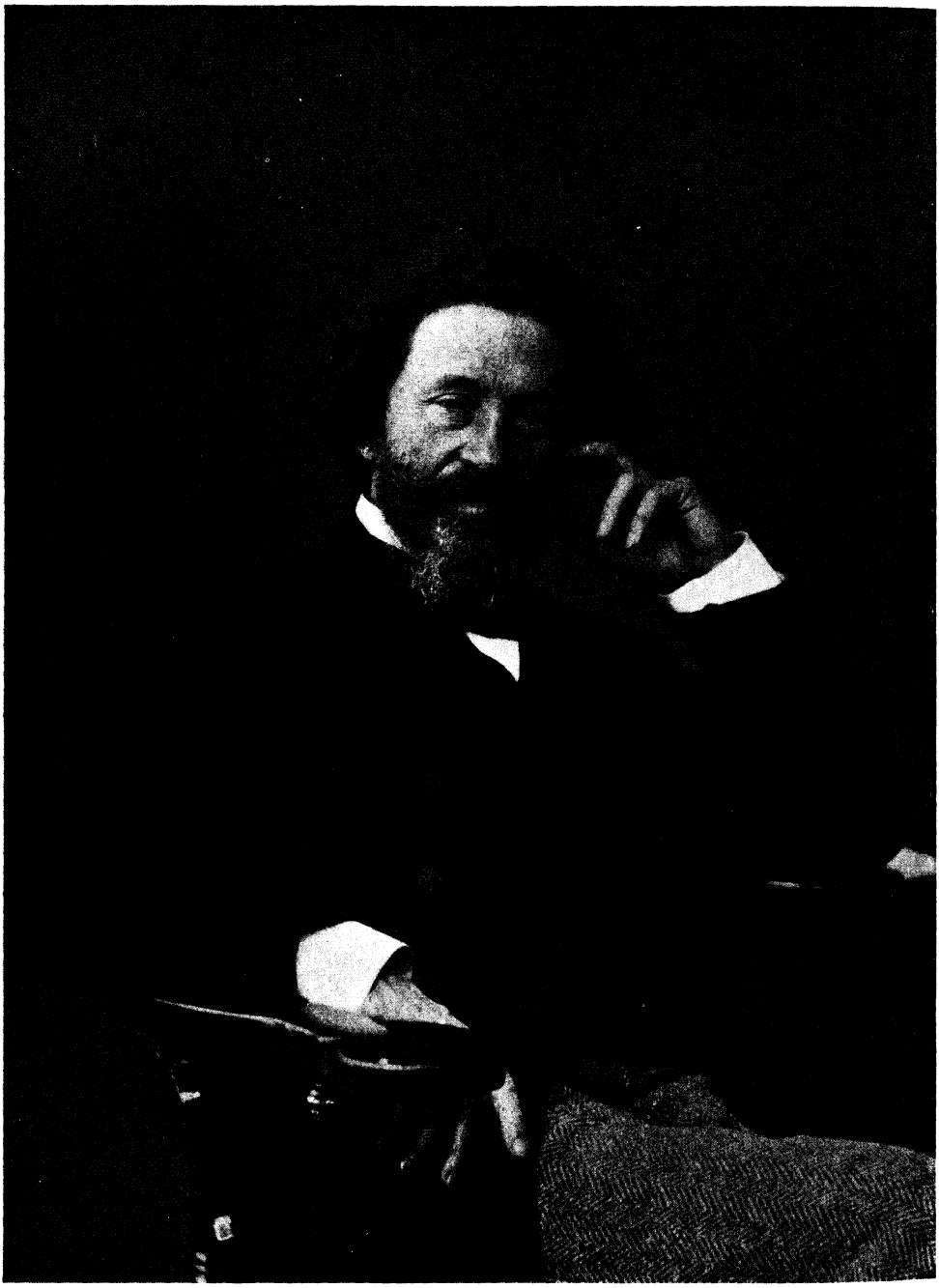
There is scant reason for passing in review more of these portraits which reflect less of life itself than a single individual's powerful though prescribed rendering of life. They touch all classes and embrace all callings. The majority were painted at the Villa Lenbach, in Luisenstrasse, not far from the soaring Propylaea. It is in reality a double structure, one part containing the living quarters, the other being dedicated to a sumptuous, three-room studio occupying the entire second storey and approached from the outside by a broad flight of steps. Hung with tapestries and rich brocades, filled with busts, bas-reliefs, antique marbles, and rare paintings the whole place breathes that Renaissance atmosphere which the painter so loved and with which he strove during so many years to identify himself. Though harmony was the passion of this man's life he lived and died an anomaly, a contradiction. He came from below and rose far beyond his station. His art, while modern in its analysis, went back whole centuries to find a congenial setting. Possessing a keen, intensive vision he persisted in looking upon the world through the eyes of other men. Despite their unques-

tioned observation and vigorous plastic energy, Franz von Lenbach's portraits constitute an entire retrospective exhibition. Behind each canvas lurks the daemon of a former and a greater artist. Here is the subdued splendour of Titian, there is the mellow gold of the sturdy Dutchman who died in obscurity, and here again is the aristocratic and melancholy charm of the court-painter who passed away that bleak December day at Blackfriars. It is imposing, this epoch in paint, yet it is often more composite than individual. It is sometimes, even, merely an affair of recollections and citations. Despite its manifestly reactionary tendencies the work of Lenbach has not been without its able apostles and imitators, at the head of whom stands Leo Samberger, whose canvases reveal the same sombre tonality, and, at moments, an even greater dramatic force than those of his predecessor. Such reversions to former modes need not, however, be altogether deplored. There will always be, in painting, these revivals, these resurrections, for the progress of art, like that of other forms of evolution, is marked by a series of curves, not by a single straight line. At intervals, indeed, as in the case of Lenbach, these curves become almost a circle—a circle within whose dim and tenebrous arcanum the painter's fancy continuously revolves.

No artist save perhaps the regal Fleming was more honoured during his lifetime. They made him a knight and an Ehrendoktor of the University of Halle. He was frequently chosen president of the International Exhibition of Munich and usually had several rooms to himself in the Glaspalast, ornately furnished and hung with scores of dark, anachronistic canvases, each of which resembled an awakened echo of bygone days, an escaped refugee of the galleries. Although he never wholly recovered from that partial paralysis which for so many months held him a rigid, unwilling prisoner, Lenbach was able to resume work before the end, which came on 6 May 1904.

His last picture was a portrait of himself which was shown at the memorial exhibition of his life work in the new and imposing building in the Königsplatz, the conception and erection of which were largely due to his efforts. For Bavaria, and for Germany, he remained one of the great ones of the earth. And when the crowd gathered silently before his villa on that bright spring morning, each watcher seemed to be saying to himself that the world had lost a master spirit—each, save a slender few who chanced to remember that the mind of man is too baffling and too complex to be reduced to a definition, and that the soul of man demands light, the pulsing light of day, for its solace and its inspiration.

ILYÁ EFÍMOVITCH RÉPIN



ILYÁ EFÍMOVITCH RÉPIN

From a recent photograph

[*Courtesy of the artist*]

ILYÁ EFÍMOVITCH RÉPIN

ON a certain occasion when Flaubert and Zola were discussing Mérimée's style, and Flaubert was endeavouring to explain why it was bad, Turgénev, who happened to be present, found it difficult to catch the drift of the matter. It was by no means because the author of 'Spring Floods,' 'Smoke,' and 'Virgin Soil' was an inferior French scholar, but because the Slav, as a rule, has small taste for analytical subtleties. In art as in life a poignant sense of reality is with each Russian an inevitable birthright. Those restless wanderers who started from Galicia and the upper Dnyépr, who founded Nóvgorod the Great and Moscow, and settled the fertile basin of the Vólga, were not theorists. The merchant traders who in turn pushed across the Uráls and penetrated the silent forests and frozen marshes of Siberia were not impelled by abstract ideas, by the Christian fervour of Crusaders, for example, but by simple motives of race instinct. From the outset the Russian has been brought face to face with the severest actual conditions. He has always been a subject and a sufferer. Now overrun by the Golden Hordes of the Great Khans, and now stifled by the iconography of Byzantine priest, the Slavic spirit had little scope for individual development. When the Mongol yoke was at length broken by the Grand Princes of Moscow the situation remained much the same. Oppression still existed; only it came from within, not from without. The people no longer paid tribute to a khan, they bowed to his successor, the

Tsar, a being almost as Asiatic and as autocratic. It was not until the observant and tenacious Peter brought back with him an incongruous assortment of European ideas and customs that material changes were effected, though even then much which was old continued untouched. While German dress and German bureaucracy were in a measure adopted, and Peterhof became a miniature Versailles, echoes of the East and of that blighting yellow invasion still persisted. French was prattled in the salons and beneath the trees of Tsárskoye-Seló, yet the populace was crushed underfoot with a cynicism wholly despotic and oriental. Down to the present time, in fact, matters showed but scant alteration. Though there were Liberator Tsars as well as sinister tyrants on the throne, progress remained dubious and intermittent. Within our own generation the beneficent clemency of Alexander II has been followed by the drastic reactionary measures of von Plehve and Pobiedonóstsev. Each step forward seems to have been offset by a corresponding step backward. The Tatár spearman merely gave way to the Cossack with his whip.

In the slow and tortuous evolution of aesthetic expression in Russia the novel preceded both music and the graphic arts. For long periods the painter was crushed beneath archaic formalism and frigid academic precedent. Just as in the broader relations of life, all spontaneous, healthy impulse was repressed by influences wholly artificial and foreign. Hardly had the bloodless Byzantine tradition spent its tenuous force when Italian and French ideals asserted their imported pre-eminence. Instead of aiming to be themselves, artists struggled clumsily to become known as the Russian Raphael, Poussin, David, or Guido Reni. A few, among whom were Lévitzky, Borovikóvsky, and Kiprensky, achieved a more specific and individual success. Though the St. Petersburg Academy was founded as far back as 1757, it was not until long after the shattered legions of Napoleon

straggled homeward through the snow and the first throb of realism had begun to stir the modern spirit that Slavonic painting showed signs of independent vitality. Even then the truth was not fully accepted, for the efforts of Orlóvsky and Veneziánov were soon discounted by the operatic romanticism of Brulov's 'Fall of Pompeii' and the clamour which attended its exhibition not only in Russia but throughout Europe. That wholesome instinct for veracity so typical of later art forms found no foothold in the pretentious and melodramatic wake of Brulov. Bruni and Neff were mere echoes of an icy classicism, and whereas Ivánov possessed both truth and emotion, his utterance was too obscure and pedantic to enlist general sympathy or comprehension.

The modest, unwitting father of contemporary Russian painting as well as literature was Gógol, a furtive little man with the face of a fox and a great mass of dark hair flapping across his anxious brow. It is from under the mantle of the author of 'Tarás Búlba,' 'Evenings on the Farm near Dikánka,' 'The Revizór,' and 'Dead Souls,' that have sprung successively such writers as Goncharóv, Turgénev, and Tolstóy, and such artists as Répin, Pasternak, and Sérov. He died at forty, a pitiful religious mystic, without realizing that his sprightly humour, the keenness of his observation, and his scrupulous fidelity to local type had proved an incalculable stimulus to the entire nation. Once Gógol had paved the way it was not difficult for Sternberg to paint that same vivacious 'Little Russia' with skill and animation, nor for Fetódov to amuse a generation with his 'Newly Decorated Knight' or 'The Major's Match.' And in Gógol also lurked unconsciously something of that homely and pathetic verity with which Pérov conceived his 'Funeral in the Country' and 'The Village Sermon.' As at the outset, literature continued to lead the way, for it was not until the greatest of Russia's artists whether with

brush or pen—Iván Turgénev—had written his ' Diary of a Sportsman ' that Slavonic painters appreciated the mournful, elegiac beauty of those gently undulant plains stretching away toward faint rim of forest or grey, unbroken horizon. Shíshkin, Lébedev, and Savrássov were among the earliest to reflect that intimate, outdoor poetry which had been so long neglected for a conventionalized Campagna, the Bay of Naples, or the spectacular remoteness of the Alps. Down to the past score of years, almost, Russian painting gained inspiration from the more personal and courageous appeal of Russian fiction. Though it is unnecessary to enforce any precise connection between the two, it is interesting to note that ' War and Peace ' antedated the military canvases of Verestchágin, and that Dostoévsky's tragic and penetrating studies in ' Crime and Punishment ' were followed by the searching sketches and portraits of Iaróchenko and Kramskóy. It matters little, however, which form of expression came first or which came after. The chief point is that each strove to reveal with increasing sincerity that great, confused, and always suffering humanity which lay just at hand waiting to be understood and uplifted.

Only vaguely it is known outside of Russia that there is living and painting to-day in St. Petersburg one of the foremost of modern masters. Only dimly is it realized that in Ilyá Répin the shifting pageant of Slavic life and scene finds one of its ablest interpreters. Yet for personal fervour, national feeling, or plastic vigour this forceful, veracious genius deserves to rank close beside Turgénev, Dostoévsky, and Tolstóy in prose, and Chaykóvsky in music. The story of Répin's career and achievement is the story of Russia during the past threescore years. On his canvases glows the history of his country with all its possibilities, all its eager, baffled effort and sullen, misdirected power. His series of portraits constitutes a Pantheon of Russia's leading minds; his naturalistic and medieval compositions

RELIGIOUS PROCESSION IN THE GOVERNMENT OF KURSK

By Ilyá Efímovitch Répin

(Trétiakov Gallery, Moscow)

reflect with impelling conviction a troubled present or a sumptuous, barbaric past. The art of Répin is above everything a distinctly racial expression. It is to Russia, and Russia alone, that he has consecrated the clarity of his vision and the surety of his hand. And these gifts he has not dedicated to the narrow province of aesthetics, but to a broader, more inclusive humanity. At first his message seemed merciless in its unflinching truth, yet gradually it took on more and more outward radiance and inward beauty. Gradually the stern accuser who had so long continued taciturn and sardonic exhaled sympathy and fellowship. Though he seems to stand alone, Répin belongs to that great succession of academic realists at whose head remained for so long the diminutive and masterful Adolf von Menzel. Once the facts of life are at his command, Répin groups them with resistless scenic appeal. He composes as well as observes. His work is both individual and typical; it is both portraiture and panorama. Despite his years this phenomenal being is still the most commanding figure in Russian art. He has touched every field and has everywhere revealed his incontestable supremacy. In each he displays the same sovereign assurance, the same flood of colour, the same impeccable composition.

Early in November, some five-and-forty years ago, there knocked at the portals of the Imperial Academy of Arts in the city by the Neva a young Cossack from the Government of Khárkov. He was pale and shy of manner, with masses of brown hair clustering about brow and ears, and under his arm carried a portfolio of sketches. The lad had come all the way from Chugúyev, an isolated village amid the steppes of Little Russia, his entire capital consisting of fifty roubles and a consuming desire to become a painter. Born 24 July 1844, of a martial father and a gentle, solicitous mother, Ilyá Répin soon displayed a taste for graphic expression. When a mere child

he used to draw pictures for his sister and her playmates as well as cut figures out of cardboard and model animals in wax. Before twelve he made creditable pencil portraits of his relatives and scrupulously copied all the woodcuts and lithographs he could lay his hands on. Though delicate, he was sent to the communal school where his mother was a teacher, and later to the near-by Topographical Institute, but on the closing of the latter was apprenticed, at the age of thirteen, to Bunákov, a local painter of sacred images. So rapid was the boy's progress that within three years he was able to support himself, receiving anywhere from two to five, and even twenty roubles for a religious subject or the likeness of some wealthy villager. Pious muzhiks and pompous rural dignitaries would often come from a hundred versts around to see his ikoni or to secure his services as ecclesiastical decorator, the most famous of his efforts being a ' Saint Simeon,' which was by no means devoid of dramatic fervour or fitting ecstasy. It was while working in the church of Sirótin that Répin first heard of the eager, ambitious life of the capital with its possibilities so far beyond the limitations of provincial endeavour. Certain of his comrades told him not only of the Academy, but of Kramskóy, the leader of the new spirit, who had lately paid a visit to Ostrogórsk, bringing with him the fashions of St. Petersburg and the ferment of fresh social and aesthetic ideas. When, at nineteen, he finally stood facing the twin sphinxes that solemnly guard the temple of art on the Vassíly Óstrov, Répin realized that he must begin anew, that much he had so laboriously learned by himself must be forgotten. Instead of entering the Academy directly he spent a year in preliminary preparation, subsisting meanwhile in the most precarious fashion, for his resources were pitifully slender. In due course he met his idol, Kramskóy, whom he found to be a dark, meagre man with deep-set, burning eyes, and who always attended his classes arrayed in a long black redingote.

Kramskóy took an immediate interest in the young provincial's work and often asked him to his house where he expounded the gospel of reality with convincing magnetism. The following autumn Répin entered the Academy, naturally finding its stilted routine cold and listless beside the rigorous, wholesome creed of his earlier master.

It would have been impossible for a young artist to have come to the capital at a more inspiring period. The era of reform which followed the liberation of the serfs was daily gathering impetus. Radiant ideas of freedom and progress permeated all classes of society. On every side were signs of regeneration, of a vast political and spiritual awakening. While the influence of such ardent apostles of the poor and the homely as Písemsky, Nekrásov, and Shchedrín found echo in the paintings of Pérov and Iarochénko, it was not, however, until the very month Ilyá Répin journeyed northward from his distant home that the movement, so far as art was concerned, took specific shape. On 9 November 1863, under the leadership of Kramskóy, thirteen of the ablest students of the Academy rebelled against soulless officialism, left the institution, and formed themselves into an independent body. The little band struggled dubiously along for a while, but later was strong enough to establish the Peredvízhnaya Vístavka, or Society of Travelling Exhibitions. It is to this society, with its hatred of classic and mythological themes and its frank love of refreshing outdoor scene, that Russian painting owes its present vitality. It was this clear-eyed, open-minded group of enthusiasts who first made it possible for the Slavic artist to go among the people, to listen to the secret song of the steppe. Although he passed six years at the Academy, Répin was never in sympathy with its ideals, nor did he in any degree absorb its traditions. Beyond everything he strove to attain an explicit truthfulness of rendering. The grip of the external was already strong upon him, the magic

of visible things exercised its own imperative appeal. So conspicuous was the young radical's talent that in 1869 he was awarded the small gold medal, and the following term, for his 'Raising of Jairus's Daughter,' obtained the large gold medal and the travelling scholarship. The summer after winning his academic laurels he went on a sketching trip down the Vólga—an event which, more than anything, opened his eyes to that serene beauty of nature and sorrowful lot of man which so long proved his inspiration. On his return, boldly and without prelude, Ilyá Répin, at six-and-twenty, proceeded to paint the first masterpiece of the modern Russian school.

It is difficult to realize the vast distance which separates the 'Barge-towers of the Vólga' from all that went before. These shaggy, sun-scorched creatures who wearily drag their heavy grain ship along endless yellow flats signify something more than a mere band of burláky. Gathered from every corner of the empire, of different ages, feature, and stature, they are one in dumb resignation, in fruitless, despairing revolt, and in ceaseless, debasing effort. Each pulls on the same sagging line, this one stolidly, that one savagely, their feet deep in the sand, their eyes downcast or lifted toward the shimmering canopy of a blue, cloud-flecked sky. They are the eternal slaves of toil. Their melancholy, barbaric song and the steady rhythm of their straining bodies suggest a great symphony of suffering, a whole cycle of human endeavour which began long since and must continue forever. The effect of the canvas is that of fulfilling mastery. The composition is inevitable, each of the types is accurately individualized, and everywhere radiates the glory of the free outdoors, not the bitumen and brown sauce of the galleries. At one stroke Répin placed himself at the head of his colleagues; with a single picture he discounted decades of rococo and romanticism. His triumph over formula was complete, and his fame as sudden and widespread as that of the young officer who,

THE COSSACKS' REPLY TO THE SULTAN MOHAMMED IV

By Ilyá Effímovitch Répin

[*Alexander III Museum, St. Petersburg*]

years before, had penned with uncompromising verity ' The Cossacks ' and ' Sevástopol Sketches.'

While his ' Burláky ' was being exhibited in St. Petersburg and Vienna, Répin had already begun that sojourn abroad, which, though it matured his artistic powers, only served to intensify his love for his native land. The Continental museums, with their remote, grandiose appeal, held no message for his observant, nature-loving temperament. He succumbed neither to the mute antiquity of Rome nor to the gracious animation of Paris. While he enjoyed the endless ferment of café and street life, he could never forget those shabby, smoke-filled student rooms where political and artistic questions were discussed with sacred ardour, nor those far-off stretches of waving plume grass. The only work of consequence to come from his brush during this period was a touching bit of symbolism entitled ' Sadkó in the Wonder Realm of the Deep,' in which the painter-exile seems to have suggested his own loneliness and home-longing. There proved, indeed, to be a prophetic note in the picture, for he returned to Russia before his allotted time had expired, having, like Sadkó, responded to the call of Chernavúshka, the beseeching embodiment of the Slavic race spirit. Once back amid the scenes of his early efforts Répin devoted his untiring energy to furthering the cause of national artistic expression. He immediately cast his lot with the Society of Travelling Exhibitions, in which he became the chief figure. At first he settled in Moscow, but later removed to St. Petersburg, where he accepted a professorship in the reorganized Academy, which, under the vice-presidency of Count Iván Tolstóy, gathered back to the fold certain of the former recalcitrants. For diversity of theme, for vigour of presentation, and searching fidelity of accent, few painters have excelled the succession of canvases which Répin therewith began to offer an enthralled public. Year after year each picture was in turn hailed as the

evangel of actuality or greeted as an incomparable evocation of the past. At times an almost ascetic severity would darken his vision, but perhaps the next work would glory in a Byzantine richness of costume, the gleam of jewels, and the glint of polished metal. Though he often gazed backward across the surging centuries, never, after student days, did he choose a subject not defiantly Muscovite.

It is absorbing to trace from canvas to canvas the unfolding of Répin's genius. His principal works are not the result of a single, consecutive transcription of something clearly formulated in the mind; they are the outcome of prolonged effort and adjustment. As many as a hundred preliminary studies were made for ' The Cossacks,' of which, during some ten years, he painted three finished versions. He is never satisfied, he constantly strives to attain a verity which seldom seems final. Although certain of his pictures are owned by the imperial family and the nobility, the majority are in the Trétiakov Gallery, in Moscow. In this low, rambling building across the gleaming river from the Krémlin are gathered upwards of two thousand representative examples of Russian art, sixty of which, including sketches and portraits, being by Répin. Such works as ' The Tsarévna Sophie Confined to the Novodévitchy Monastyr during the Execution of the Strélitz,' ' The Tsar Iván the Terrible and his son Iván Ivánovitch,' ' Nicholas the Miracle Worker,' and ' The Cossacks' Reply to the Sultan Mohammed IV ' reveal Répin as an historical painter of incontestable mastery. While ' The Tsarévna Sophie ' is scarcely more than a tense and harrowing study in physiognomy, ' Iván the Terrible and his Son ' challenges comparison with the grim Spaniards at their best. In one of the sombre chambers of the Granovítaya Paláta, Iván, in a passion of demoniacal ferocity, struck down his favourite child, and, an instant later, realizing what he had done, clasped the bleeding, shattered boy to his breast. It is this swift transi-

tion from murder to agonizing remorse that Répin has depicted with a primitive directness equalled only by Ribera. So overpowering is the tragic horror of the scene that when the canvas was first placed on view women fainted and men turned away aghast. Yet the picture is more than a gruesome episode. It conjures up as nothing has ever done that dark inheritance, those brooding centuries of barbaric splendour and relentless savagery which form the background of present-day Russia. In 'Nicholas the Miracle Worker,' who is that holy Nicholas of Myra who prevented the execution of certain Christians during the reign of Emperor Licinius, Répin bathes his figures in a suffusion of light which heightens the solemnity and dramatic suspense of a situation that so narrowly escapes becoming one of mere brutal butchery. 'The Cossacks,' which is notably popular abroad, perhaps best displays Répin's effective grouping, his robust, almost Flemish opulence of colour, and his characteristic gift for portraiture. The mocking bravado of each countenance tells its own story. You can literally hear the derisive laughter of these liberty-loving Zaporózhtsi as the regimental scribe pens their defiant answer while they gather about the rude, card-strewn table. Like Gógol before him, Répin has here rolled back a few hundred years. We are again in the days of Tarás Búlba and his pirates of the steppe, that stormy inland sea over which used to roam Kazák and Pole, Tatár and Turk.

Yet all the while he was steeped in the past Répin never lost identity with the issues of his own day. Side by side with the painter of history worked the painter of contemporary life. The Russo-Turkish war furnished him with several themes, and in what is known as the Nihilist Cycle, consisting of 'The Conspirators,' 'The Arrest,' 'The Unexpected Return,' etc., he portrayed with minute, penetrating intensity that smouldering social volcano which has been responsible for so many generations of anguish and self-immolation. Among the numerous

works of this period are two that merit special attention—'Vechernítsi,' or, as it is generally called, 'Russian Village Dancers,' and the 'Religious Procession in the Government of Kursk,' which was supplemented by a somewhat similar 'Procession.' Nowhere has Répin's Little Russian origin betrayed itself so humanly as in these simple, naive merrymakers who meet at some far-away traktír and pass the night before their wedding dancing by candle-light to the tune of violin, pipe, and balalaïka. There is a humour, an almost tender playfulness to the episode that proves Répin is not always the austere martyr painter. In the 'Procession,' with its struggling, seething mass of humanity, its fat, gold-robed priests, stupid peasants, wretched cripples, cruel-mouthed officials, and inflated rural dignitaries, Répin seems to have given a synthesis of Russia. Borne aloft are the sacred images; banners and festoons flutter on the dust-laden air, and in the midst of all, close beside crucifix and pleading Virgin, whistles to right and left the knout. While simply depicting a scene one might witness any day on the parched highways of southern Russia, the picture possesses deeper significance. In essence it is a condemnation, and one all the more severe because clothed in the inflexible language of fact.

During the past decade Répin has painted several memorable pictures, and this, despite his duties as professor at the Academy, despite continuous commissions for portraits, and various huge commemorative panels. 'The Duel,' which was awarded the medal of honour at the Venice Exposition of 1897, is unquestionably one of his most dramatic and subtly poetic conceptions, though 'Follow Me, Satan!' and 'What Boundless Space!' aroused equal enthusiasm. The latter shows a young man in the uniform of a university student and a young woman standing hand in hand amid a madly plunging torrent. On account of its symbolism the public has experienced a certain dif-

VILLAGE DANCERS, LITTLE RUSSIA

By Ilyá Efímovitch Répin

[*Trétiakov Gallery, Moscow*]

ficulty in divining the meaning of this picture. Is it a warning, or is it a call to self-sacrifice? Whichever it may be, there is no question that Répin's heart is with this fearless, exultant couple in their hour of peril or of triumph. Although Ilyá Répin's reputation abroad is chiefly due to the larger, more pictorial compositions, many of his countrymen claim that the portraits represent a higher level of attainment. It is obvious that these likenesses of Tolstóy, Písemsky, Mussórgsky, Surikóv, Glinka, Rubinstein, and dozens of statesmen, authors, generals, and scientists possess matchless precision and personality. They are invariably vital in treatment and concise in characterization. Face to face with his sitter, Répin is a rapid workman, jealous of essentials and scornful of trivialities. The prophet of Yásnaya Polyána he has painted scores of times—behind the plough, at his bare writing-table, or strolling abroad a convinced disciple of Father Kneipp. Not only has Répin sketched, modelled, and painted Tolstóy, but he has also illustrated a number of his books. Their friendship, like that between Bismarck and Lenbach, has extended over many years, growing ever closer as the time of parting draws near.

In his summer studio in Finland, or his roomy, workmanlike quarters in the Academy, before the doors of which he once paused an unknown, aspiring provincial, Répin is passing the remainder of his days. Although he has already placed to his credit a lifetime of achievement, creative enthusiasm still persists. One by one his companions have gone, leaving him an isolated figure. Of those who lingered, Makóvsky has fallen sadly behind in accomplishment, and his early champion, the late veteran critic Stássov, never wholly forgave him for returning to the Academy. His chief source of pleasure is found in teaching, and it is significant to note that his pupils, who revere him, usually carry off the majority of the official prizes. It is impossible

to measure the extent of his influence upon the younger men. The most brilliant among them, such as Sérov, Malíavin, Braz, Schmárov, and Ivanov, owe much of their success to his inspiration and counsel. Throughout his entire career Ilyá Répin has remained a rebel and a fighter, an enemy, by inference at least, of Church and State. The political as well as the artistic influence of his paintings has been immense. At various times he has approached the danger-line of audacity, but always, instead of his being disciplined, the offending picture has been purchased for private edification by the Tsar or some grand duke. So open has occasionally been popular approval of his more radical works that they have been removed from public gaze within a few hours after being placed on exhibition. At the bare feet of Leo Tolstóy, when a recent portrait of him was first shown, were daily heaped so many floral tributes that the cautious authorities were moved temporarily to sequester the picture.

The invincible naturalistic tradition represented alike by Répin in painting and by his contemporaries in letters is the legacy of their day and generation. Its appeal is not to the imagination, it is in no sense an ardent revelation of the soul, but rather a convincing transcription of the outward and visible. Like Turgénev, Répin is one of those instinctive realists who can create only from the living model. Never, even in his most powerful and concentrated moments, does he wander from the wealth of fact always at hand. The stricken, tortured countenance of Iván's dying son is practically a portrait of poor, distraught Garshín in the final stages of insanity and suicide. The confused, haunted expression on the face of the exile in 'The Unexpected Return' was suggested to the painter by the appearance of Dostoévsky when he came home after years of Siberian immolation. Yet it need not be assumed that Répin is a slave to the literal and explicit. The predominant quality

of his work is its emotional and scenic intensity. In his feeling for art there seems always to linger the vitalizing magic of things fecund and elemental, as well as a supreme gift for arrangement.

Seated in his quiet studio amid the gathering twilight of late afternoon, grey, shaggy, with contracted brow and keen, questioning eye, you instinctively think Répin less the painter or poet than the man of science. When he came on the scene the Byronic outbursts of Púshkin and the eloquent heart-hunger of Lérmontov had long since been swept away; the age of observation followed, carrying all before it. Imprisoned between Byzantine hierarchy and Gallic prettiness Répin boldly freed himself and became a convinced apostle of nature. It was the kingdom of earth which he inherited, not the shadowy, elusive kingdom of dreams. In all its outlines the art of Répin typifies the painter's own specific epoch; it definitely incarnates the temper of his race and his time. Like Courbet in France, Ilyá Répin has fought almost single-handed a long, and in the end, a victorious battle. He possesses, too, something of the primal energy of the sturdy peasant of Ornans, but to that quality adds the knowledge and graphic mastery of Menzel. And yet, however formidable his achievement may now seem, it is by no means the final word of Russian painting. Already a younger generation is pressing close about him. Just as Manet dethroned Courbet, and Répin dethroned Brulov, so others have stepped forward to challenge his ascendancy. Men such as Sérov, Malíavin, Juon, and Grabar have lately arisen to dispute, or at least to share, the position of Répin, Koróvin, and Lévitan. Naturalism found its reply in impressionism, which, in turn, has been modified and extended by the individualist and the symbolist. Weary of social problems and the sorrows of the proletariat, sensitive spirits such as Sómoff and Benois glance backward toward the eighteenth century, toward the gardens of Peterhof

and the leafy arbours of Tsárskoye-Seló. Nevertheless, the painter of so many scenes throbbing with life and truth looks on undisturbed, for he knows that the farther these pallid fantasists wander the sooner must they return to that reality which is the master and the mistress of us all.

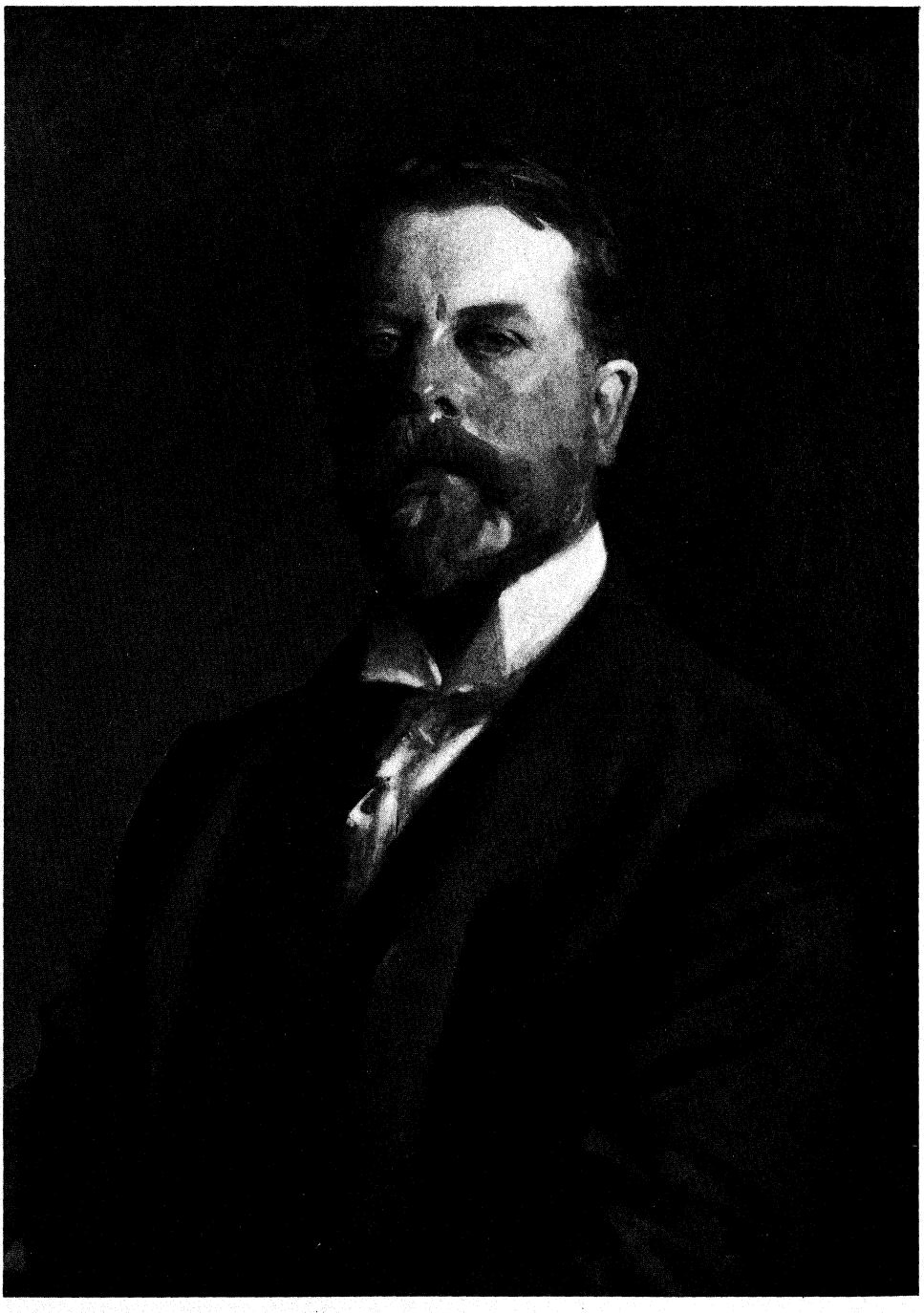
It was not until the Paris Exposition of 1900 that the Western world in any degree realized what Russian art had accomplished, and since then progress has been relatively more encouraging than before. As though after a long slumber, Slavonic painting is emerging clear-eyed and refreshed, choosing whatever suits her here or there, yet always retaining the memory of a powerful and characteristic inheritance. While numerous canvases that figure annually at the exhibitions of the Mir Iskoússtva in St. Petersburg or the Soyúz in Moscow are directly traceable to the influence of Répin, newer elements have lately been in evidence. The Russian artist who now goes to Germany comes back less filled with the studio heroics of Piloty and Makart than with the broad, decorative vision of Zügel. If it happens to be Paris where he studies, he is apt to return with something of the prismatic fluency of Monet or Besnard or the psychic, penetrant evocation of Eugène Carrière. Yet it is a wholesome thing for these younger artists to go abroad and develop technical facility, for technique is precisely what Slavonic painting has thus far woefully lacked. There is little ground to fear that foreign trained men will in any degree drop their distinctive flavour; nationality is becoming too strong a factor ever to be lost sight of. Naturally there are other and more concise reasons why Russian art is to-day so abundantly racial in accent, the most important being the exceptional prominence attained during the past decade by the Rural Industries movement. At Abrámtsevo, Taláchkino, Somolénka, and other provincial centres throughout the empire have been established schools for assisting and directing the peasants in weaving, dyeing, em-

broidery, wood-carving, and similar branches of native craftsmanship. By going back to the naive simplicity of early ornament as preserved among the peasants, and by supplementing it with modern taste and invention the art of the entire country has been enriched and fortified. A number of men, among whom are Vrubel, Malútin, and Golóvin, are devoting most of their energies to this movement, the influence of which on painting as well as interior decoration has already proved considerable. It seems, indeed, the leavening factor in Russian art, and is but another and saner phase of that "going to the people" which was formerly responsible for so much heartache and heroism.

Those same qualities of vigour, sincerity, and fearless, lucid presentation which established the supremacy of Russian fiction should achieve a similar position for Russian painting. The salvation of Russian art, as of most art, lies in a saving sense of nationalism. It is particularly true of Russia that her best expression flows direct from the sap of popular life and legend, and to an instinctive, almost primitive, love of colour will eventually be added a surer outline and a more chastened choice of subject. While the Society of Travelling Exhibitions does much toward stimulating public appreciation in the various social and intellectual foci of the empire, yet the peasant who lives close to the heart of nature and who spontaneously translates his impressions into outward form is quite as important as his urban brother. These humbler souls, so beset by wistful apprehension, and so full of artless fantasy, must not be forgotten in any survey of Russian painting. For it is they who, in large measure, are responsible for what is best and most typical in an art which is both modern and barbaric, both insolent and tender. Because these same misguided muzhiks are still pillaging estates and murdering their landlords, it need not be assumed even by confirmed alarmists that the country is in danger of being torn

asunder and forever obliterated. A nation which, for over two centuries, withstood that relentless Mongol domination can survive a few months, or years, of economic and political disruption. The red flag of anarchy, like the blue banner of Jinghis Khan, must in time give way before the enigmatic double-headed eagle of the Palaeologus.

JOHN S. SARGENT



JOHN S. SARGENT

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

[*The Uffizi, Florence*]

JOHN S. SARGENT

SHE stands upon a glittering crescent, with a cobra coiled at her feet. About her floats a blue, diaphanous film. Her robe is richly embroidered with gold, her brow studded with jewels. On each side sway the devotees of a wanton, voluptuous dance, while beneath writhe the victims of her desires, one torn by a vulture, the other being devoured by a chimera. She is Astarte, the moon goddess, seductive and heartless. When she first came to London, and later found place in the Boston Public Library, it was difficult to believe that she had been summoned from the past by one whose energies had so long been confined to contemporary portraiture. There seemed to be no connection, no point of contact, between her and the lengthening list of her more inquiet and modern sisters. Even now, after a dozen-odd years, both Astarte and her setting are a source of mystery alike to the casual spectator and the conventional admirer of John S. Sargent. Yet instead of being an enigma, she is in reality the key to the work of a painter who presents a singularly consistent and homogeneous artistic personality. Beyond all question he is the most conspicuous of living portrait painters. Before his eyes pass in continuous procession the world of art, science, and letters, the world financial, diplomatic, or military, and the world frankly social. To-day comes a savant, a captain of industry, or a slender, troubled child. To-morrow it will be an insinuating Semitic Plutus; next week may bring some fresh-tinted Diana, radiant with

vernal bloom. Everyone, from poet to general, from duchess to dark-eyed dancer, finds place in this shifting throng. Detached, at times indifferent, he looks from one to another with incisive, comprehending glance, and transcribes each with the same incredible assurance. Personally uncommunicative, his art is the epitome of lucidity. His vision is strictly literal. Wonderfully endowed, he dedicates his gifts to rendering the outward semblance of things, to reflecting that which is explicit and external. He is in no sense a painter of thought, or of feelings other than those which are plainly etched upon the human countenance. He is but secondarily, even, a painter of colour. That to which he devotes his incomparable talents is the texture, form, and shape of objects. His only kingdom is the kingdom of the eye, and this kingdom he restricts to mere physical appearance.

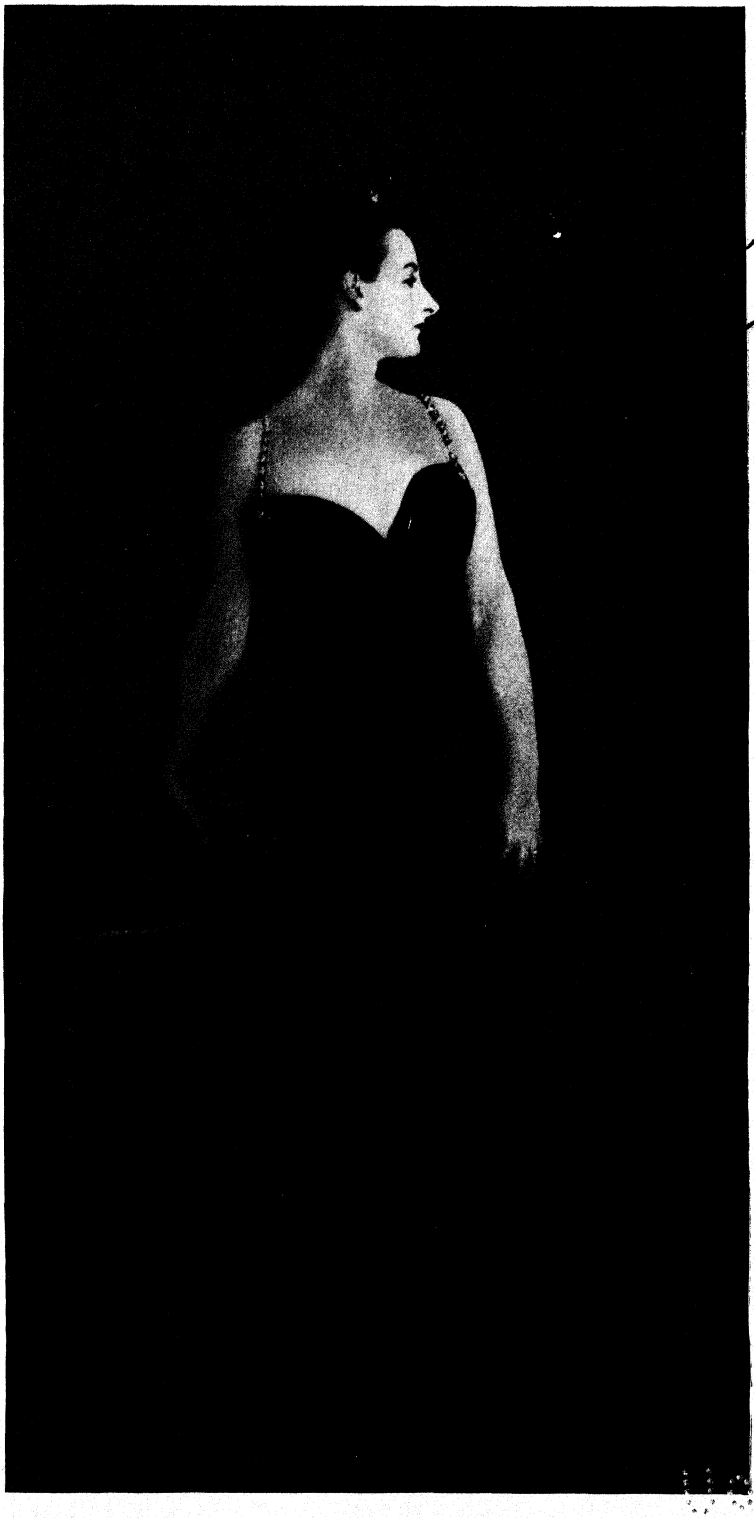
With the entrance of Sargent into the arena of art cherished conventions disappear in sorry discomfiture. With a dignity and a technical mastery which compel both respect and enthusiasm he tramples upon tradition whenever tradition stands in his way. It is useless to scan these canvases in the hope of finding various qualities which for centuries have been deemed the touchstones of portraiture. Contemplation and reflection are by no means the rule. That fine adjustment of diverse elements which makes for balanced composition is often lacking. That endearing love of tone for its own sake is frequently absent. The vigorous outline of Holbein, the rich sobriety of Titian, or the permeating magic of Leonardo find but faint echo in the work of this modern innovator. With almost disdainful independence he has declined to repeat the triumphs of the great forerunners. In place of their ideals he has substituted ideals which are resolutely his own. However you may regard his contribution, it is impossible not to recognize its insistent novelty. Once in possession of the underlying facts, there should

be no trouble in reading aright this salient, positive art, this art which by turns persuades and repels. Yet you cannot divine just why these high-bred women are so animated, or why the soldiers and statesmen are so emphatic, without first peering beneath the exterior. Though Sargent may himself remain dexterously on the surface, the spectator cannot. It is not enough to watch this conjurer perform his trick; we must see how it is accomplished.

So dazzled has the majority been by what is called the man's cosmopolitanism that the real racial basis of his nature has been overlooked. In essence this much discussed quality is merely the eclecticism of the well-born and travelled American. Just as Whistler was American in temperament, so Sargent is American in his fundamental instincts. His adaptability and his very lack of marked bias bespeak the native complexity of his origin. It cannot for a moment be maintained that the French paint themselves as Sargent paints them, or the English either. His art is neither Gallic nor British, it is American, and the chief reason why it is so different from most Anglo-Saxon art is because it is so superior, not because it is unAmerican. Born in Florence, 12 January 1856, educated in Germany and Italy, a student at the Florence Academy and a pupil of Carolus-Duran, in Paris, it is not difficult to perceive that Sargent's point of view must inevitably be that of an unattached observer. Entirely without local background, he has remained all his life an onlooker. Wherever he has lived or wandered he has been absorbed by certain definite pictorial possibilities, and by the personal idiosyncrasies of those about him. To the trained analysis of a physician father and the artistic enthusiasm of a mother who herself painted well, was added his own innate receptivity. Nothing could have been more fortunate than the way inclination and the turn of circumstance conspired to perfect his youthful ability and create within him that vitality of style

which so soon became manifest. Whatever tendencies he may have had toward speciousness were early held in check by an old-world restraint, the gift of a city wherein art has become a hallowed instinct. But in order that the spirit of things past might not press too heavily upon creative power, he left Florence at precisely the right age for Paris, where all he had absorbed became quickly utilized. He lingered just long enough, yet not too long, under the shadow of the masters of the Pitti and the Uffizi beside whose work his own portrait was one day to hang.

It was in 1874, when he was but eighteen, that the tall, slender youth and his grey-haired father knocked at the doors of Carolus-Duran's atelier in the boulevard du Montparnasse. Directly he examined the portfolio of sketches the lad had brought, Carolus accepted him as a pupil. They were not in the least brilliant or dashing; most of them were in fact minute and painstaking copies or details accurately traced from nature, yet they were sufficient to arouse the interest of his future master. Although the painter of ' The Lady with the Glove ' and ' Mlle. Croizette ' has since sadly lost ground, it is doubtful whether a beginner could at that period have found anywhere in Europe a more efficient preceptor. An adept in the direct, fluent laying-on of pure, fresh colour, a man whose sense of construction was sound, whose eye for values was exact, whose handling was spirited, and whose whole manner was effective and mundane, if superficial, Carolus had little difficulty in fostering a talent in many regards so closely akin to his own. They were earnest, industrious times, those Paris student days, and no one worked more assiduously than the reserved, even diffident, young American who not only attended his classes under Carolus but also studied at the Beaux-Arts and drew from the model at an evening life-class. Being particularly fond of music, the routine was now and then broken by certain memorable Sunday afternoon concerts at the Châtelet or the Cirque d'Hiver. Although



MME. GAUTREAU

By John S. Sargent

[*Possession of the artist*]

he did not advance with undue haste, it was not long before he had acquired that control over his medium which is both the delight and the despair of his generation. Even as a student he could cover an entire canvas while his atelier companions were laboriously blocking in a single head.

In the way of valedictory the pupil painted a seated portrait of his master which was both the summary of all he had learned and a resolute promise of future attainment. He was already mature in point of decision and that easy solution of technical problems which is supposed to come with time alone. Following the lead of Carolus, he acquired the habit of representing bodies by mass rather than by outline, each brush stroke corresponding as nearly as possible in size, shape, and local colour to the object itself. Still more important was his faculty of instantaneous perception, his ability to see at a single glance and in its entirety either an isolated individual or a group of figures. It was a formula which had descended direct from the incomparable painter of 'The Maids of Honour,' 'The Tapestry Weavers,' and 'The Surrender of Breda,' but under Sargent's ready initiative it became expanded as well as simplified. Whereas Velázquez and Manet were also imaginative impressionists, their younger apostle became a purely visual impressionist. A quiet deliberation marks even the most rapid and vital of their work. It remained for the American to apply to portraiture the principle of immediacy, to express that which is transient and momentary rather than that which is habitual and permanent. Until Sargent's day it had been generally supposed that a portrait should record a composite of moods, that it should offer, in a sense, a continuous revelation of the sitter. With a few swift, nervous strokes he has changed all this, he gives us personality in a single epitomizing flash. In its final stage this art illustrates the difference between perception and apperception.

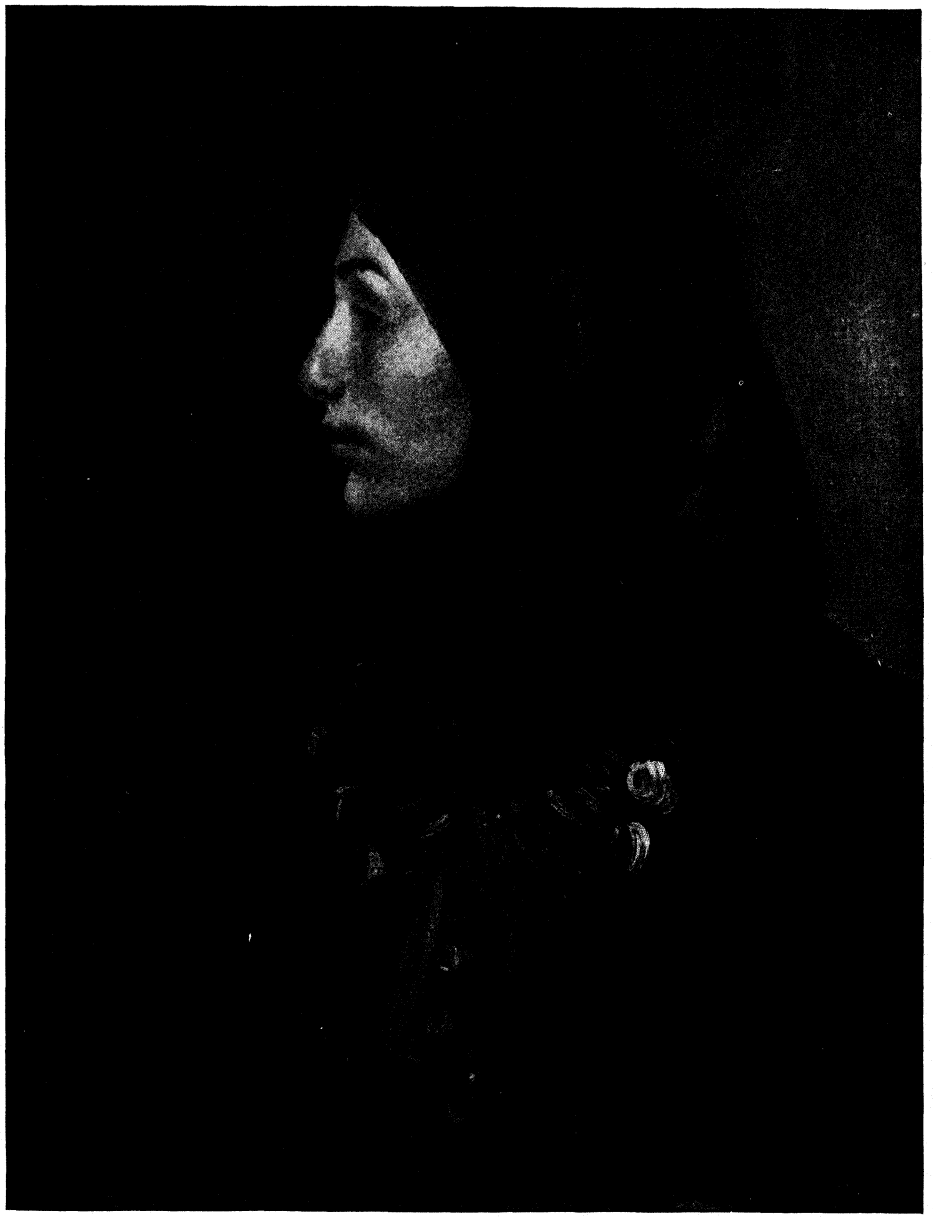
Study in succession these vivacious likenesses and you will the better realize that which Sargent has accomplished, you will, indeed, find something which painting has never before achieved. Velázquez's little 'Baltasar Carlos' on his plunging pony scarcely suggests motion; the pictorial couple in Gainsborough's 'Morning Walk' is really stationary, but in Sargent's portraits women are in the act of starting from their chairs and men are on the very point of speaking. Here is a dancer whose yellow skirt still swirls in elastic convolutions; there stands a painter lunging at the canvas with sensitively poised brush. All is restless, vivid, spontaneous. One and all these creatures vibrate with the nervous tension of the age. Other artists have given us calm, or momentarily arrested motion. Sargent gives us motion itself. His art is kinetoscopic. With a technique as facile as it is assertive this magician of the palette, this Paganini of portraiture, has lured us into a new world, a world which we ourselves know well—perhaps too well—but a world hitherto undiscovered by painting. Moreover, he has taken us a long way. We have in truth travelled far from where 'Jane Seymour' stands with her jewelled fingers tightly clasped, or 'La Gioconda' muses beside immemorial rocks and silent waters. Though you may not relish the triumphs of this younger master you cannot escape them. While you may keenly feel the lack of repose in these portraits you cannot deny their veracity or their vitality. Yet, after all, is this neurosis, or is it art? Perhaps it is both. In any case the sense of motion, either suggested or expressed, remains Sargent's personal conquest, possibly, even, his chief contribution to portraiture.

On leaving Carolus-Duran he took a studio in the rue Notre-Dame-des-Champs, later moving over to the more spacious boulevard Berthier. It was only necessary for him to paint a dozen or so portraits in order to obtain international recognition. The eloquent 'Carolus' was succeeded by an effective

presentation of ' Dr. Pozzi ' which still looks from the walls of the distinguished specialist's hôtel in the avenue d'Iéna. The ' Portrait of a Young Lady,' ' Mme. Pailleron,' and a standing full-length silhouette of ' Mme. Gautreau,' as sensitive as it was decisive, soon followed. Conceived in the vein of a modernized Primitive, this last-named canvas proved a veritable storm-centre. It is Piero della Francesca, not, as has been presumed, Botticelli whom this much discussed likeness recalls. Violently denounced and quite as vehemently praised, it added substantially to the painter's fame, and proved, to a certain extent, the turning-point of his career. From ' Mme. Gautreau ' onward he leaves behind the stamp of previous effort. The delicate mellowness of the ' Portrait of a Young Lady ' and above all the soft, liquid beauty of the little-known likeness of ' Mrs. Austen ' dressed in cream-white satin with a black bow at the neck and a bouquet of dark red roses at her breast, are seldom seen again. One after another these qualities are replaced by characteristics more specifically personal. In 1884, after just a decade in the French capital, which had been broken by a brief visit to the United States and a few months' sojourn in Spain, Tangier, Morocco, and southern Italy, Sargent was induced to move across to London. He resided at first in Kensington, later taking the now famous house in Tite Street, Chelsea, with its mottled brick, pointed Dutch roof, and irregular windows. He executed portraits as before, among others those of ' Mrs. Henry White,' ' Lady Playfair,' and ' The Misses Vickers,' but just as he had once sought greater freedom in ' El Jaleo,' so he again varied his manner with ' Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose.' Painted at Broadway during the lingering summer twilight, this picture, so imbued with frank grace, charm of colour, and a distinct though largely accidental symmetry of pattern, continues to occupy a place quite apart from the main body of Sargent's art. Exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1887, it was purchased the

same year for the nation by the trustees of the Chantrey Fund, a fact which doubtless strengthened the painter's inclination to settle permanently in England.

As the ever widening panorama of his British and American work unrolls itself before the eye in all its clarity of tone and fluency of treatment, it is only necessary to consider in detail a few of the more significant canvases. The man's productivity is astounding. Only the Titans of art have here surpassed him, and by a narrow margin at that. He will occasionally avail himself of the full member's right to exhibit eight pictures at Burlington House, besides sending four or five subjects to the New Gallery or elsewhere. As a rule his single figures maintain the highest average of merit, the larger groups such as 'Lady Elcho, Mrs. Tennant, and Mrs. Adeane,' 'The Ladies Alexandra, Mary, and Theo Acheson,' and 'The Misses Hunter,' being more problematic. The scattered arrangement, the violent foreshortening, and the various lines forced into relation tend to give these subjects a decided lack of equilibrium. Moreover, an artist so definitely modern as Sargent is not at home in the pictorial realm of the eighteenth century. He is not a composer, or a ready improvisor, he is an observer pure and simple and when he relies upon nature alone he never goes astray. While the majority of these inquisitive creatures in iridescent satin or figured silk may look overvolatile, and while these men in street dress or braided uniforms may seem a shade too imperative, you will now and then find countenances upon which nought is written save quiet benignity, such as those of 'Mrs. Marquand' and 'Miss Octavia Hill.' It is by no means a restricted choice that Sargent exercises. Next to a lithe, fox-hunting lord comes a little lady in quaint, full robe and fancy cap, who may some day rank beside Titian's 'Princess Strozzi.' He has always displayed a special tenderness for children—here they play about a great hallway where tall vases are re-



EGYPTIAN WOMAN WITH COIN NECKLACE

By John S. Sargent

[*Courtesy of the artist*]

flected in the polished floor, there they peep over the back of a Louis-Seize sofa upon which is perched a vivacious mother in shell-pink evening gown. Wherever you turn you will be greeted by spirited, forceful canvases, marked by a particular zest for exterior effects and revealing a concise, and for the moment convincing, grasp of character. Although individual, this art by no means stands apart from the main current of contemporary social as well as aesthetic expression. It is of course realistic in flavour, yet it is the realism of elegant surroundings, of rich appointments, and well-bred types. It is, in short, the realism of modern refinement. Wealth having been won after numerous hard-fought battles, the man of the present luxuriates in a superbly ornamental 'Venetian Interior.' While his chief predecessor in England had come across from Flanders to be the painter of aristocracy, John S. Sargent will go down to posterity as the painter of its latter-day equivalent—plutocracy.

Caring little for society, Sargent devotes his entire energies to the practice of his craft. His industry and persistence are unremitting, he having often been known to paint a single head over a score or more of times before being satisfied with the result. No pains are spared in order to acquire that appearance of ease and spontaneity which he perhaps prizes beyond all else. His art is the antithesis of the art of Watts. The one is the glorification of matter; the other, the glorification of manner. With Watts theme was everything; with Sargent treatment always comes first. He does not pretend to gauge the relative mental or moral value of that which has been put into the world; he contents himself with placing on record whatever he finds most congenial to his tastes and temperament. Although inundated with commissions, nevertheless, when haste and overproduction begin to exact their relentless toll, or when something of that world-weariness which pursued van Dyck steals upon him, he usually has the courage to leave his London studio and

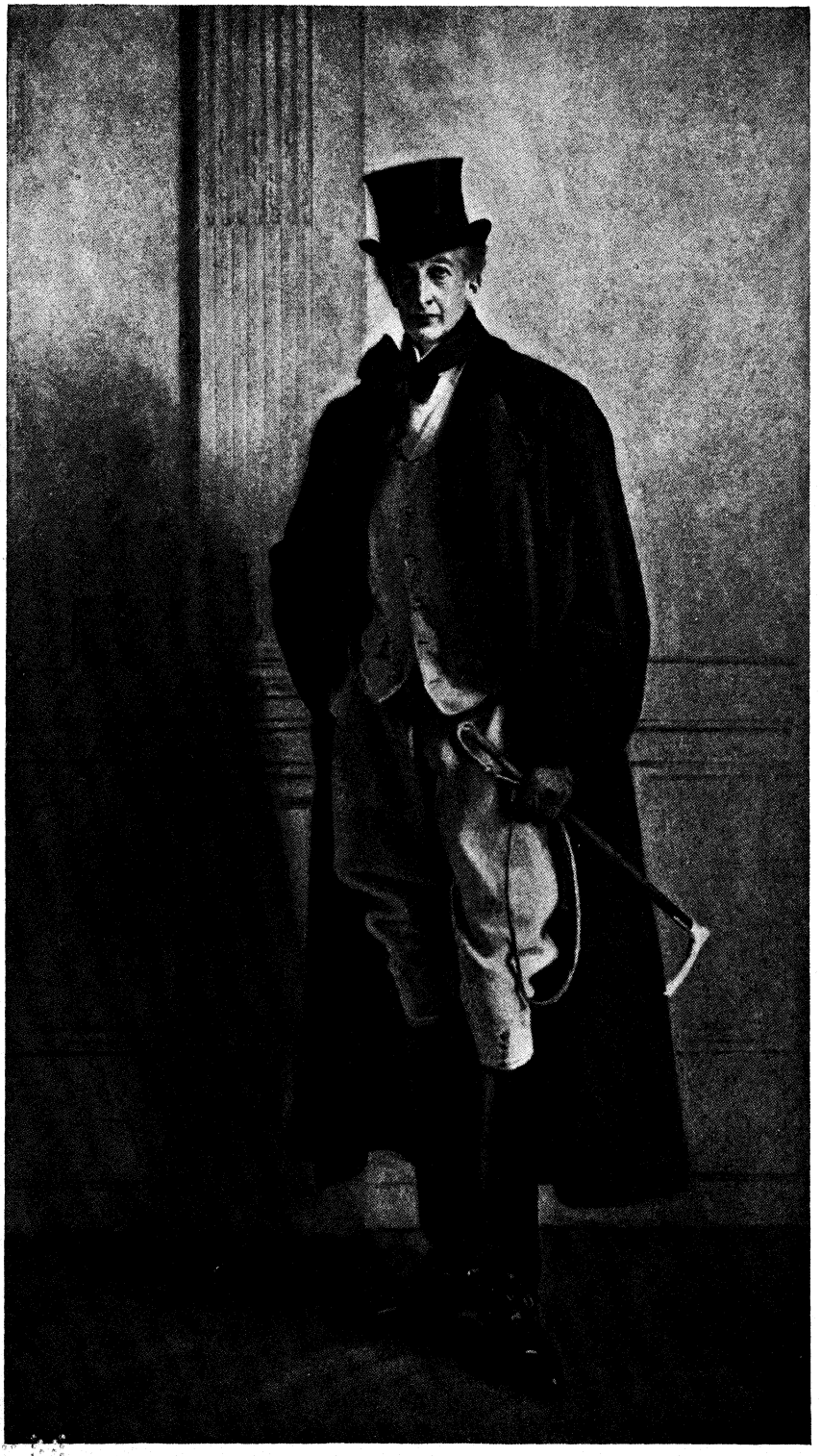
seek a new province, a resplendent, colourful realm. And where is this fair kingdom? It is the kingdom wherein we left Astarte poised upon her gleaming crescent, exhaling warm tints and exotic perfumes, the sound of the sistrum still falling upon her gold-tipped ears. You will possibly be surprised to learn that this correct, urban man is something of an Asiatic, that he loves with consuming intensity the glare of the sun and the sultry magic of long-robed Orientals. In the art of John S. Sargent the blue-veiled Phoenician goddess of the Boston Library by no means dwells alone. She had her prologue years before with the Moorish woman in 'Smoke of Ambergris' holding the folds of a white mantle about her head like a canopy in order to catch the narcotic fragrance circling upward in thin, vapoury spirals. Under one guise or another this same creature appears again and again. Now she is a discreet social sphinx, now a slender Nile girl slowly braiding her dark hair, or a swarthy desert beauty bedecked with rich ornaments. The painter's interest in this type is not episodic, it is persistent. Throughout his career the models in which he has been most absorbed are not the products of polite convention but those individuals one meets by chance or seeks out in sheer zest. A distinct sympathy with Southern life has always shown itself in Sargent's work. Whenever he travels it is preferably to Spain, Tangier, Morocco, Sicily, Egypt, or Palestine. He seems drawn toward these countries by an irresistible affinity. When not sketching along the shores of the Mediterranean, in the by-streets of Venice, or the olive groves of Capri, he manages to discover the same or kindred subjects wherever he may happen to be. In New York he forsakes a Knickerbocker sitter in order to paint 'Carmencita.' At the Paris Exposition he nervously dashes off drawings of the Javanese dancers. His greatest successes in London have been his portraits of the astute aristocracy of finance rather than those of the more complacent

aristocracy of blood. Glance, for confirmation, at 'Asher Wertheimer,' 'The Misses Wertheimer,' 'Mrs. Carl Meyer and Children,' or 'Mrs. Leopold Hirsch.' Indeed, as a painter of Semitic types he has scarcely had an equal since the day their greatest interpreter lived and suffered in the garrets and pot-houses of Amsterdam.

They are not claimed as masterpieces, these rapid, graphic sketches such as the 'Capri Girl,' the 'Italian with Rope,' the 'Egyptian Woman,' or the 'Bedouin Arab.' They are mere memoranda betraying undisguised joy of observation and execution. There is no fatigue here. All is fresh, native, and racial. That gift of ethnic delineation which makes it possible to recognize at a glance the nationality of Sargent's sitters is even more in evidence in his oriental personalia. Although they are the reverse of painstaking, no really important detail appears to have escaped him. The same spirit of accurate transcription distinguishes the larger compositions, which, while fewer in number, are relatively more significant. The 'Street in Venice' with its shawl-wrapped figure hastening past a couple of curious idlers, and the 'Venetian Bead Stringers' showing three busy workers in a dim interior are among the earliest and best of these casual impressions. In the most incidental manner and without the slightest pretence he gives us a series of unforgettable portraits of place. In 'El Jaleo' and 'A Spanish Dance' he displays a concentrated frenzy of movement attained only by such men as Goya, Degas, and certain of the later Parisians. And, besides, there is a purely Latin touch of the diabolic in both these latter scenes which is difficult to reconcile with the chief living exponent of Anglo-Saxon portraiture.

Although many of these studies were made early in his career Sargent has never forsaken the field of informal endeavour. Almost every season he returns to it with increasing zeal, usu-

ally exhibiting at the New Gallery the souvenirs of his various trips. Of late Asia Minor has been his favourite sketching ground. While 'The Garden of Gethsemane' was in no way exceptional, he has never, for implied spirituality, approached 'Padre Albera,' seated at his writing table with books and personal effects strewn about his cloisteral retreat, nor has he ever, for downright luminosity, surpassed that dazzling, coruscated strip of 'Syrian Landscape' with its stunted trees standing sharp against the sky, its flock of long-haired sheep, and solitary shepherd in his fez, leaning over the wall. Whether they show 'The Mountains of Moab' or subjects less momentous these colour records are always brilliant, always vivid. They often fairly crackle with light. It is indeed light which they show more than anything else, for they rarely or never suggest air. Though in his earlier days Sargent spent a summer or so with Monet, and has long evinced an interest in problems of colour, he seldom attains that vibrancy of tone which is the particular triumph of the modern palette. As a portraitist he has remained untouched by radical impressionism, and in his outdoor diversions he has failed to solve this latest and most subtle of nature's secrets. It would of course be whimsical too strongly to insist upon the Asiatic touch which permeates so much of this work, yet it seems an inherent characteristic. Is it the pallidness and artistic poverty of western existence which drives him toward the rising sun, or is it some obscure call of the blood? It must be either, or both, otherwise it is difficult to account for many things, not the least among which is the apt assimilation of oriental motives displayed in the Boston Library decorations, wherein he has embodied with so much adroitness not only the conventions, but the actual spirit of Assyrian and Egyptian art. Again, in the 'Dogma of the Redemption,' with its dim blues, dull reds, and mellow golds, he has caught with more than a copyist's trick the archaic beauty and impersonality of the



LORD RIBBLESDALE

By John S. Sargent

[*Possession of Lord Ribblesdale, London*]

Byzantine tradition. The portraits themselves show certain kindred qualities, such as a love of accessories and a constant insistence upon tapestried screens, pottery, and bric-à-brac in general. And deeper still lurk traces of cynicism, of indifference to humanity, of that almost contemptuous submission to the tyranny of his calling so often the legacy of those whose eyes have been turned toward the enigmatic East.

Despite his unchallenged supremacy, it is not immediately obvious that John S. Sargent stands quite where he should, nor is it altogether clear that he has kept the promises of youth. He was given much at the outset, hence much may be expected in return. The recipient of an honourable mention and hors concours in the early twenties, and a Royal Academician by the time he had barely turned forty, he has always been a sort of Prince Charming of art, a trifle cold and unmoved, it is true, but phenomenally fortunate. He has worked with unrelaxing energy and enthusiasm, yet success was never far distant, nor has he ever been compelled to look a cold world starkly in the face and ask unanswered questions. No artist of recent times has been more royally equipped. In power of vision and technical mastery he ranks among the greatest. Besnard and Zorn are his only rivals; Rubens, Hals, and Velázquez are scarcely his peers. It is a question, however, whether this dexterity has not tended to encourage a lack of humility when confronted with the graver problems of the situation. There is a danger of so much facility becoming perverted or remaining an end in itself rather than a means to some higher end. And yet on the other hand it may become, and it often does with Sargent, a legitimate source of emotional pleasure. No one has carried technique farther than he or given it such a degree of expressional significance. In spite of his keen eye for race distinctions and the subtle variations of type or class, it cannot be maintained that Sargent's versions of character are profound.

Though often shrewdly diagnostic, they are seldom more than that. He rarely seeks to lift the veil of mystery or interrogation which enshrouds less emphatic temperaments. His vision is local, not general. That which he so efficiently gives us is not so much personality as personalities. He possesses sight, rather than insight; and much of his supposed psychology reduces itself in the final analysis to mere physiology. It is of course absurd to accuse such a flawless mechanism of any desire to distort or to exaggerate personal imperfections. It is not the painter's business to sit in judgment upon those who come to his studio, and though he may possibly in his youth have been touched by the Marah-rod of bitterness, his canvases in the main display an abundance of wholesome impartiality.

Passing in review Sargent's production as a whole in all its specific, audacious brilliance, it becomes increasingly evident that his gifts have been those of the senses rather than those of the spirit—gifts of eye and hand rather than of mind or heart. He has achieved as no one else that particular accent of to-day which is at once our pride and our reproach, but just how much he has enriched the sum of beauty already in the world, or just how much he has increased man's love for man, or for woman, is an open question. At the present moment these creatures whom his brush has called into being seem impatient and unsatisfied as well as unsatisfying. Yet doubtless they will soon glide into their place in the perspective of art, taking on that indwelling serenity which alone is the gift of time, and which, when deserved, time seldom withholds. In each of its manifestations this art proves itself to be essentially concrete and objective. It is not an art of penetration or aspiration, it is an art of superficies. No concessions are made either to background or to sitter. No feats of mental metamorphosis are attempted in order to get inside of character. All propensities moral, sentimental, or literary, are rigidly debarred.

Conscious intervention of every description has disappeared. The elaborate simplicity of Whistler is scorned, for at his best Sargent neither arranges nor composes but takes both man and nature as he finds them. He cares little, even, for flesh tints, often painting faces with precisely the same broad stroke as he does fabrics. While he does not deliberately dehumanize humanity, he takes no pains to enforce the human note, nor does he borrow from his subjects the slightest adventitious assistance or sympathy. Though it may not be the last, this work is assuredly the latest and most marked stage in the evolution of painting toward complete independence of choice and treatment. It is the most defiant assertion yet seen of the autonomy of art.

JOHN LAVERY

FATHER AND DAUGHTER

Portrait of John Lavery and his daughter Eileen, by the artist

[*The Luxembourg, Paris*]

JOHN LAVERY

WHILE it is possible that the love of beauty drifted inward from the sea, or was blown to Glasgow fresh from Highland glen or brae, it is equally probable that there was something definite in the social and psychic conditions of the thrifty city on the Clyde which called art into being. Humanity has a ready faculty for supplementing natural deficiencies, and, moreover, nothing is farther from the truth than the contention that art cannot flourish in an atmosphere of industrialism. Those teeming commercial centres of the past, such as Bruges, Venice, and Amsterdam, witness the precise contrary, and the Glasgow of to-day affords a not unfitting parallel. As usual, outward circumstances played an important part in the formation of taste and the fostering of those particular qualities which were later to reveal themselves in a deeper, more resonant chord of colour and a thrill of genuine romantic aspiration. Almost a score of years before England or America appreciated Continental landscape there existed north of the Tweed numerous private houses rich in the works of the grave Barbizon masters, the sober painters of Holland, and the tone visions of that sumptuous rhapsodist, Adolphe Monticelli. While permanent displays at the Corporation Galleries, and the frequent exhibition of the Donald and similar collections at the Royal Glasgow Institute did much to quicken artistic perception, it was the International Exhibitions of 1886 and 1888 at Edinburgh and Glasgow respectively which gave

the present movement its chief impetus. Jointly they exercised a profound influence upon several of the younger spirits who were endeavouring to free themselves from the soft tyranny of the pretty milkmaid school and the cumbersome conservatism of academic authority. In addition, those few pioneers who were fortunate enough to study in Paris brought back with them an invigourating infusion of novel aesthetic principles. A splendid stand was taken by this handful of enthusiastic aspirants. Anecdotal pictures were regarded with utter contempt, and the bigwigs of British art were openly derided. Bound together in common revolt against precedent, the Boys of Glasgow soon made their presence felt. For the most part as impecunious and unknown as they were aggressive, they had everything to win and nothing to lose, and win they did in generous measure.

It nevertheless took the discerning eye of an observant Teuton to gauge at its full value Glasgow's initial contribution to art. The field at home being restricted, and the doors of Burlington House closed to all that was virile and spontaneous, the group exhibited for the first time as a body in 1890 at the Grosvenor Gallery in London. Among the visitors on this occasion chanced to be a certain enlightened Bavarian known as Herr Adolf Paulus, who was so favourably impressed by what he saw that he immediately posted off to Glasgow, met several of the artists in person, and arranged for a still more comprehensive display of their work that same season at the Munich Glaspalast. So complete was their success, and so strongly did a particular clique resent the appearance of these Scottish invaders, that serious differences arose in official art circles which eventually led to a separation and the formation of the still famous though somewhat less radical Secession. At the outset the Glasgow men painted mainly landscapes; later, under the influence of Whistler, they devoted more of their time to the

figure. They were not to any extent an organized society. They were merely a number of independent and strongly individual artists held together by the stimulus of kindred aims and ideals. While they used often to gather at one another's studios to discuss their pictures and decide which to exhibit, only one formal meeting was ever held. It proved a signal failure, for they were painters, not parliamentarians; and so earnestly did they devote themselves to the cause in hand, that, with rare exceptions, they became famous men. A few have gone beyond recall, and others have long since left their stern, seaborn city, but most of them are still sending forth into the world solemn, glowing stretches of wood and meadow or portraits which seem imbued with all the chaste, wistful magic of the North. As years have slipped by their prestige on the Continent, and more especially in Germany, has increased, rather than diminished. Their cohesive power has continued strong. They always exhibit as a compact unit, and have not failed measurably to influence numerous foreign artists, among them the landscape painters Ludwig Dill and Adolf Hoelzel. In a smaller, though none the less important way, their appearance in Munich suggests the debut of Bonington and Constable at the Paris Salon over three quarters of a century before. They have, in short, added a chapter to the history of European art.

It is appropriately whimsical that the most brilliant and expressive product of the Glasgow School should not be a Scotchman at all, but an Irishman. Because he resides in London, and spends so much of his time abroad, it is customary to speak of John Lavery as a cosmopolitan. Yet in point of fact he is essentially of the North and West. The artist who, as a mere lad, drifted across from Belfast to Glasgow still reflects that frankness, that innate charm, and that directness of statement which are so typically racial and Scotch-Irish. From the very first the boy seems to have been bent on becoming a painter. In his

early teens he officiated as " operator " in the studio of Bell, of Glasgow, where, in addition decorously to bowing pompous patrons in and out of the establishment, he also coloured photographic enlargements by hand. Phenomenally adept at this branch of work, the latent portraitist could rarely resist widening his area of activity by giving his subjects a dash of character here and there in the lines of brow or mouth or the tilt of nose. Being thrifty, as well as ambitious, it was not long before he was able to attend the Haldane Academy of Art where, in the company of Alexander Roche and other future Glasgow painters, his artistic training was formally begun. The two friends were totally unlike in temperament, and for that reason perhaps the better suited. Even in those early, groping days they used to discuss artistic problems with undisguised zest just as they afterward did while strolling along the quays by the Seine or sketching among the Sabine Hills. It was in 1881 that Lavery and Roche, having rapidly outgrown the restricted facilities of the Haldane Academy of Art, decided to study in Paris. They both entered Julian's, Lavery going with Boulanger and Roche with Lefebvre. Among their fellow-pupils was Gari Melchers, and, in common with the youth of the time, they soon forsook the romantic idealism of the Barbizon masters, passed inevitably under the spell of Bastien-Lepage, and dreamed eloquent dreams concerning the mission of naturalism. It was superb, even heroic, while it lasted. They gallantly loaned each other five-franc pieces in the name of artistic or social advancement, and, in due season, gravitated toward other influences.

Minute fidelity to nature and the mute, homely pathos of peasant life did not, indeed, long hold Lavery in submission. He was too volatile, too sparkling, to shoulder the burden of heavy-handed toil or to share the lot of the labourer. The characteristic quality about him even as a beginner was his positive genius for progression along just those lines which could best

MARY IN GREEN

By John Lavery

[*Possession of the artist*]

contribute to his advancement. With unerring surety he seized upon the precise things he needed and upon nothing else. During the formative period in Paris, or those subsequent trips through Holland, Germany, Italy, and Spain, it was impossible to get this keen-eyed, sagacious youth to betray the remotest enthusiasm for the robust opulence of Rubens, or the amorphous richness of Titian. He barely glanced at the Flemish master's 'Descent from the Cross' in the Antwerp cathedral, and afterward, in Rome and Florence, showed scant sympathy for the emphatic solemnity of Michelangelo. Both in subject and in treatment his leanings were wholly toward the current and the contemporary. He detested mythological themes and abhorred the smoky hues of the galleries. Preferring above all else clarity of tone, he would stand for hours gazing at the crisp whites and blacks of Frans Hals in Haarlem or Amsterdam, or the pellucid sobriety of Velázquez. Neither the historical nor the legendary possessed the slightest interest for the young painter whose art was one day to possess so much that is natural and colloquial and so little that is conventional or artificial. Later, when he turned to history, as in 'The Night after the Battle of Langsyde,' which hangs in the Modern Gallery of Brussels, it was to weave into the incident his own poetic interpretation, and the sole legend he has ever sought to portray is the legend of modern femininity.

The struggling, ambitious days at the Julian Academy and in the none too palatial atmosphere of the Hôtel de Saxe were followed by years of earnest effort and experiment in the sombre commercial capital of the North. It was the precise period when the Scotch painters were laying the foundation of their future success. Lavery, Roche, and Guthrie were back from Paris, Walton had returned from Düsseldorf, and each man was cultivating his powers with salutary earnestness and enthusiasm. Although he painted assiduously, and with a ready, almost dis-

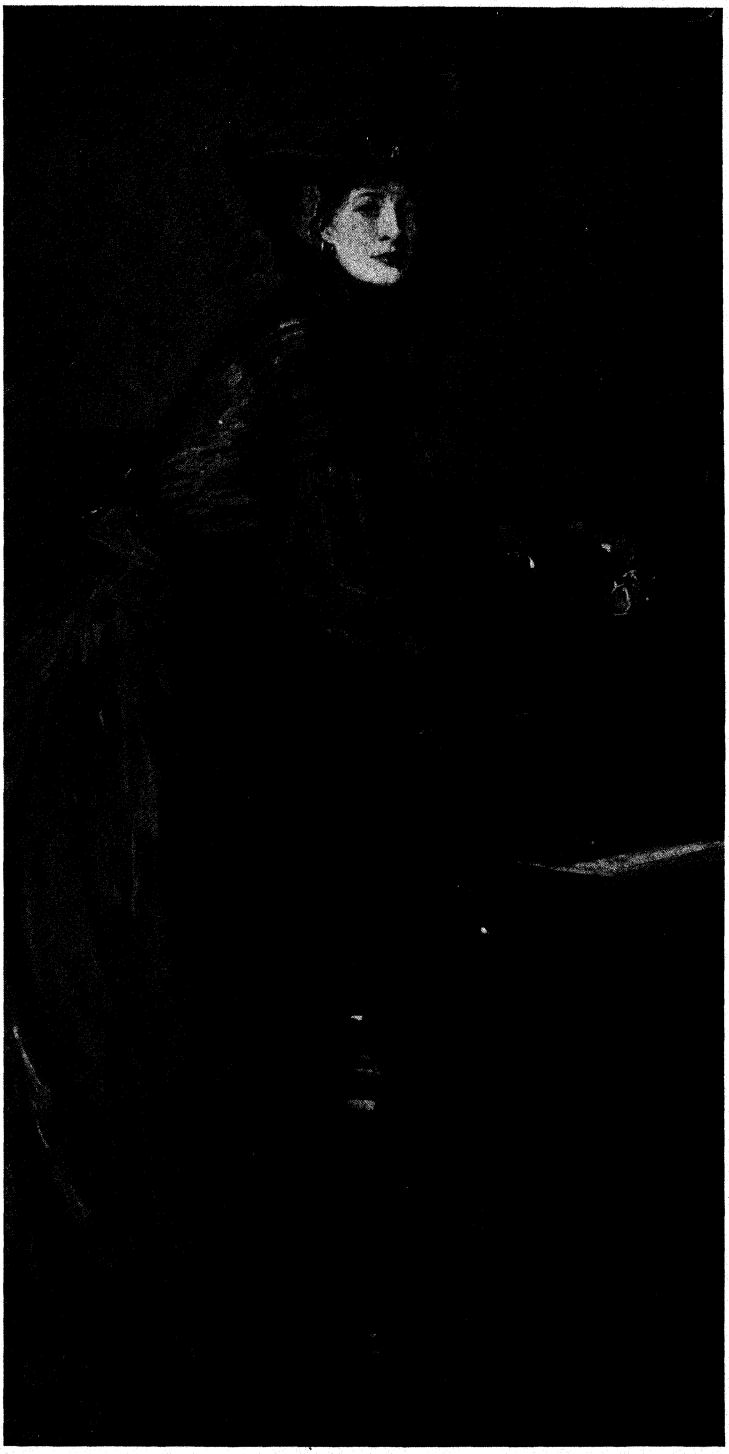
concerting facility, Lavery's first really important production was his ' Tennis Party ' which to-day shares a place beside Cameron's ' Bridge ' in the Munich Pinakothek. Shown at the Royal Academy of 1887, it was sent to the Salon of the succeeding season, where it won a gold medal, later finding a permanent guardian in the Bavarian Government. It is significant to note that Leighton, on passing through the Salon, paused approvingly before the ' Tennis Party ' and remarked, " Now that's the kind of picture we should have for the Academy," calmly oblivious of the fact that the noble institution of which he was then president, had, in a moment of unwonted inspiration, exhibited the canvas the previous year. By dint of exceptional talent and unflagging personal industry the Belfast painter kept himself constantly before the public. Though he had barely turned thirty, it was Lavery who was commissioned to depict the ' State Visit of Her Majesty Queen Victoria to the Glasgow Exhibition of 1888,' and again it was Lavery who, together with Roche, Walton, and Henry, was chosen to decorate the Banqueting Hall of the Glasgow Municipal Buildings. Busy as he was during these and the following years, he still found time to take numerous trips to France, Spain, and Morocco bringing back with him extraordinarily fresh and vital studies of local types and scenes. Though he painted in countries notable for vivid splendour of tint, Lavery never went colour-mad as have certain of his colleagues. A native subtlety and refinement of perception and presentation mark each of these canvases, whether they show ' A Garden in France,' ' The Bridge at Grès ' with its changing lights upon the water's surface, or the teeming ' Soko ' outside some white-walled African town. It is as though the artist after all loved best the quiet hues of his own mist-wrapped land and sought to find them, or their equivalent, everywhere. At any rate he declined to give us shrill, garish versions of Mediterranean life and character, bearing in mind

the fundamental fact that the sun, however hot and bright, bleaches all things just as it has Tanger la Blanca.

While his love for colour only mildly increased as time drifted by, the distinction of Lavery's style became decidedly more manifest when, after a season or so passed in Rome and Berlin, he finally, like his friend Henry and other of the Glasgow painters, settled in London. For one who had seldom exhibited in the English capital his rise was rapid. In due course he took the studio in Cromwell Place built for the late Sir Coutts Lindsay and afterward occupied by Sir James D. Linton, which is to-day the scene of his multiple activities. Portraiture, in which he had always shown a keen interest, proved his most effective introduction, Lady Young being among the first of that now extensive series of slender, elegant flowers of the British aristocracy whom he depicts with such becoming felicity. Without influence or the prestige of being a Royal Academician, he moved quickly forward until, by the sheer dexterity of his brush, he had conquered a firm position beside such established favourites as Sargent and Shannon. It was realized almost from the beginning that the newcomer had something to say and could say it in piquant, unhackneyed terms, and with a caressing tenderness of accent notably lacking in his most formidable rival. His attitude toward the world was conciliatory rather than critical. It would have been impossible for him, being born in Ireland, to have been unable to please, if not, in fact, to captivate. Already well known abroad through the purchase of several of his pictures for the principal European galleries, he was appropriately chosen vice-president of the newly organized International Society of Sculptors, Painters, and Gravers, the president being Whistler, who, on his death, was succeeded by Rodin. It has usually been Lavery's duty, even from the first, to preside at most of the meetings, formal or otherwise, and seldom has friend and fellow-craftsman paid more fitting trib-

ute to a departed comrade than that which was contained in the brief Whistler memorial address delivered by the vice-president at the annual meeting of the Society on 15 December 1903.

The special appeal of Lavery's art, whether you select the most modest and fragmentary outdoor sketch or the most elaborate of his finished portraits lies in a certain inherent unity of effect. The whole scene is there clear and scintillant, or bathed in fluid black, brown, grey, or gold. The particular person in question stands before you with magnetic finality. Over the surface of each canvas the eye wanders without encountering a single distracting note. There is no falsity in attitude, no forcing of tone. While there is always present an indwelling wealth of sentiment, there is seldom the slightest attempt at securing extraneous advantages. The boy who progressed with so little in the way of external aid was succeeded by the young artist who needed only a group of people playing tennis on the greensward, with bits of sunlight flecking the grass, in order to paint a picture which won the approval of Europe. The aspiring photographer's assistant later learned to pose the most beautiful women in the kingdom against a plain, neutral wall-space or seat them naturally side by side. No references literary or poetical were needed in order to elucidate art such as this. It was its own commentary and furnished its own reason for being. Though in his search after the spontaneous and the inevitable he was leaving behind the beloved, painstaking manner of many of those about him, Lavery never faltered. Tact and intuition—the knowledge of just how much to do and how much to leave undone—always guided his hand. And besides, somewhere in the background stood a certain bygone Spaniard who seemed to say that all was well. Consciously or unconsciously there were two separate elements which the sensitive, eclectic painter was striving to combine—the gracious charm



POLYMNIA

By John Lavery

[*Courtesy of the artist*]

of British art and the grave restraint of Velázquez. He was seeking to correct Anglo-Saxon looseness and sentimentality with something of that dignified severity which the painter of Philip possessed in a higher degree than has any artist the world has thus far known. In order to see how successful he was you need but scan almost any of these flowing, instantaneous likenesses, not forgetting, of course, his avowed tribute to the older master in the challenging full-length of R. B. Cunningham Graham, Esquire, in top-coat and riding boots. Something more than the mere man is here. The picture represents both personality and protest, and it would be difficult to find a subject upon whom protest rests more naturally or more congenially than it does upon this selfsame literary, political, and social iconoclast.

It has been jauntily assumed that Lavery's portraits owe much to the portraits of Whistler, that they even too implicitly suggest the magic invocations of the most subtle of all pictorial mesmerists. The name of Manet, too, is occasionally mentioned in connection with that of Lavery. It is well to preserve, if not to create, distinctions, and the real point appears to be that Lavery's territory lies midway between the more trenchant realism of Manet and the elusive spiritism of Whistler. That which Lavery achieves is not an insistence upon, nor yet an avoidance of, actuality. Nothing is demanded and nothing given save a persuasive sense of personality. There is no denying that Whistler's influence on the Scottish artists was considerable, yet what he taught them was not how to paint, but how to see. His precepts were the better placing of the figure upon the canvas, a surer feeling for decorative pattern, and the faculty of immersing each subject in a quiet, luminous, aerial envelope. While there is something of Whistler in much contemporary portraiture, the free, ample handling of Lavery has little in common with the glazed finish of the painter who has given

us ' The Yellow Buskin ' and ' Miss Alexander.' Moreover, Lavery is neither abstract nor mystical. It is neither the mind nor the soul to which he preferably devotes himself. The special atmosphere which surrounds his sitters is as much of their own as of his making. He does not endow them with a tremulous, inquisitive supplication. They do not muse or dream, they vibrate with life and motion. If he can be said to bestow aught upon these gracious women, thoughtful men, or fresh-faced children, it is simply a dash of that contagious attraction which is his in such rich measure and which he cannot help radiating.

The merest glance at ' The Violin Player,' ' Mother and Son,' or ' Polymnia ' is sufficient to prove that Lavery, despite his popularity, is no formal, conventional painter of pretty faces. The early canvases in particular reveal a liberal comprehension of his calling. They are both portraits and pictures. Certain of them suggest the sort of thing the early Manet was fond of doing, and others again recall the interiors of Alfred Stevens. They linger submissively on the dividing-line between the exact and the undefined. The figure seated alone in the dim music room with her violin bow resting idly across her lap awakens innumerable dormant fancies, while the slender blonde, gowned in black, idly dropping rose-petals on the polished piano cover breathes an aroma at once luxurious and discreetly seductive. And even when the painter attempts more concise delineation, as in ' Lady Hamilton,' in the ivory-white and shell-pink half-length of ' Mrs. Wetzlar,' or the artless, unaffected aristocracy of ' The Sisters,' there is usually an air of improvisation about the ultimate result. Yet above all, these portraits are interpretative. In the precise turn of head, in veil lightly brushed aside, or the soft gleam of ring, brooch, or bracelet, you have not only individuality but the secret of that feminine charm which has so disturbed the serenity of the ages. Although each detail comes easily and unsought, no trick of

identity is missed. These women do not all sit, stand, or dress alike. They have that variety which is the variety of nature, and which is not the least welcome of the gifts nature has bestowed upon her daughters.

It is consoling to know that Lavery does not exclusively devote his powers to a portrayal of the conscious products of female artifice. If anything, he appears to prefer those more ingenuous, less sophisticated types which flourish not alone in the British Isles but in the presumably buoyant and expectant heart of man the world over. Happily most of the artists from across the Border still remain faithful to former scenes and associations. Just as Roche has given us a series of 'Bettys' and 'Nancys,' so Lavery has painted a number of 'Noras' and 'Marys,' together with a pair of becomingly pictorial embodiments of vernal loveliness, the one entitled 'Springtime,' the other 'The Girl in White.' Confident yet unstudied in pose and invigoratingly clear in tint, these semi-portraits are by no means maidenly innocence reduced to a formula. While they reflect, it is true, traces of romantic simplicity, they are the fitting personification of qualities which are distinctively national, and hence inevitable. Especially in such canvases as 'Mary in Green' and 'An Irish Girl' do you feel that Lavery is on ground of his own choosing. They both breathe a freshness which is flowerlike and instinct with the truest outdoor beauty. It is a province which is peculiarly the painter's own, nor can all the mundane elegance of London or Paris extinguish in him that race kinship which is stronger than any acquired convention and which cannot fail to betray itself alike in completed portrait or the slightest, most inadvertent brush-stroke. For a considerable period the art of Lavery was somewhat sombre in its tonality. Colour was there, but it was subdued colour. It is possible that Velázquez and Whistler had blown upon his palette the tints of dimly lit palace chamber or the suppressed hues of

the night. Gradually, however, his schemes strengthened and took on greater chromatic variety. The blacks of the Spaniard, the browns of the American, and the chalky greys of the pulmonary Bastien finally disappeared. Perhaps this darker world was dispelled by the infectious smile of some West Coast 'Mary' or the sparkling eyes and crisp white frocks of an even younger apparition who sat cosily in a big arm-chair, or stood, reverent and expectant, dressed for 'Her First Communion.' At all events the painter now delights in sharper contrasts and the often piquant use of primary colour notes. He is especially fond of a bright blouse or parasol spotted against a stretch of green or a blue strip of sky or sea, and such effects he handles with consummate dash and distinction.

It is consistent with his temperament and training that Lavery should be a rapid, dexterous workman, happy in his results and swift in their attainment. In the early Glasgow days he is said actually to have executed within the space of four months some fifty finished oils showing various aspects of the International Exposition, and few of his fellow-artists have ever known him to hesitate no matter what technical difficulty might present itself. He is an inspirational, rather than a systematic or logical craftsman, and though failures are not infrequent, there is an unassuming air about his successes which redoubles their charm. While his feeling for structure is by no means always exact, much may be forgiven one in whose work the pulse of life so seldom fails to beat or whose art never pretends to be more than it is. The light by which Lavery paints in the big studio in Cromwell Place is an east light, coming from the side, not the customary north, or top light. He uses a large palette and draws freely in colour directly on the canvas. He is medium-sized with a mobile, somewhat Celtic cast of countenance, and is as full of wit and genial spirits as the sons of Erin are rightfully supposed to be. While the records do not so state,

THE SISTERS

By John Lavery

[*Courtesy of the artist*]

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it is more than likely that he originally came from the Moira district, where abound the "Baun-Laverys," the "Roe-Laverys," the "Trin-Laverys," and the "Hard-Laverys." In any case, throughout those precarious student struggles in Glasgow and Paris he was the soul of courage and animation, and now that success has come in such gratifying measure he continues as generous and open-hearted as ever. Though he has long been a member of the Royal Scottish Academy, of which his friend and associate, Sir James Guthrie, is president, it is probable that the powers that be would not have been averse to enrolling him in that other Royal Academy which holds its annual displays in London. Thus far, however, he has remained benevolently oblivious of the Burlington House oligarchy, preferring as a rule to exhibit under the auspices of the International Society, the Society of Portrait Painters, or abroad.

In contrast to the work of many of his countrymen, notably those of Saxon persuasion, there is nothing either narrative or didactic in the art of John Lavery, a fact that largely accounts for the high esteem in which he is held on the Continent. He is thoroughly modern in his leanings, believing that the mission of the artist is to deal with things around him and treat them strictly in terms of his medium. He is instinctive and non-theoretical in his attitude toward all forms of art, and when asked about his own efforts usually smiles with playful deprecation and says, "My pictures are the only opinions I profess." Not long since, when questioned as to which he considered his best painting, he replied, with characteristic spirit, "My latest." That there should be any difficulty in realizing why it is hard for Lavery to discuss his work is unlikely. This art, which is at the same time so fugitive and so contained, so full of nervous daintiness and yet so rigorously restricted to the matter in hand, is not an art of ideas, but rather an art of impressions. These flexible, patrician creatures are in no degree the symbols of

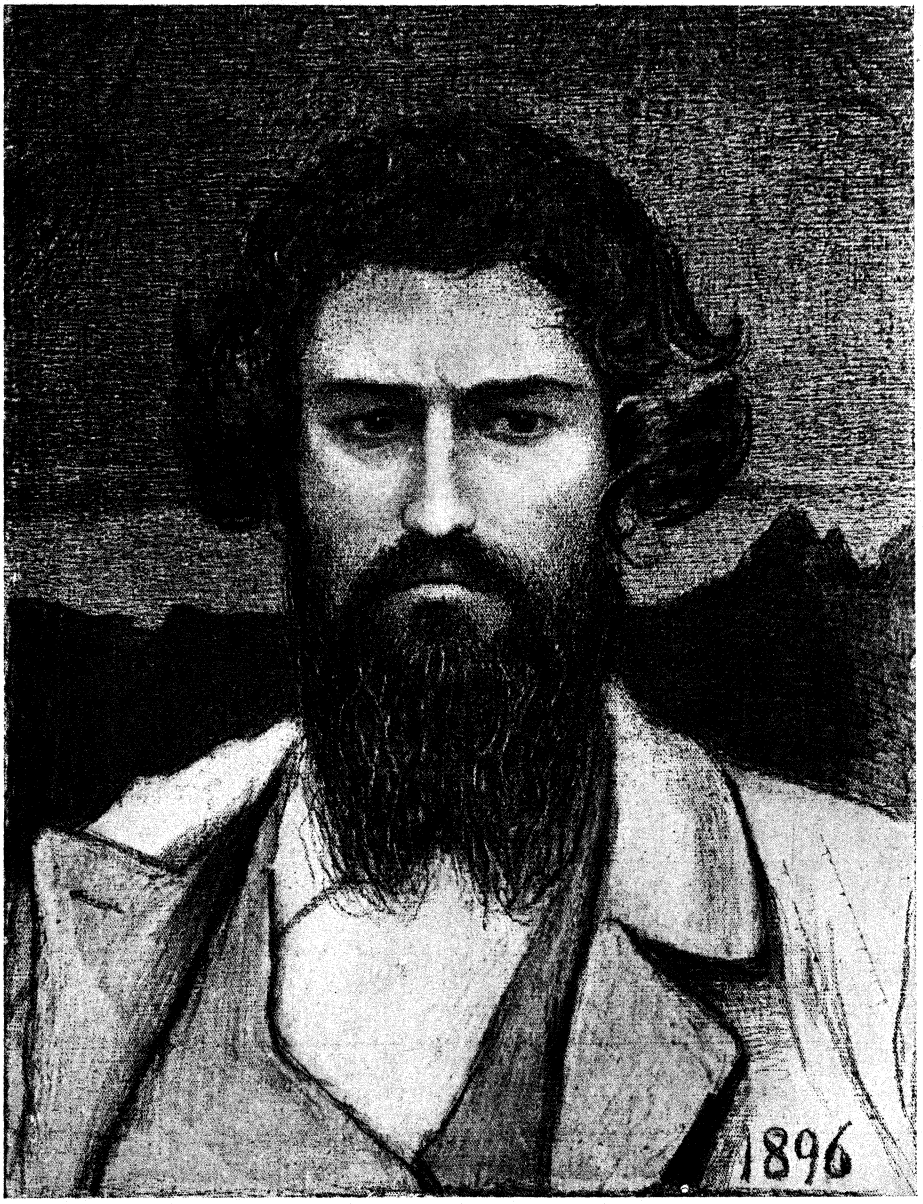
doubt or of self-analysis. No attempt has been made to distort their bodies, or to dissect their souls. The visible appearance of things, not their moral or philosophical purport, is Lavery's preoccupation. He is a painter of effects, not, primarily, of facts. Out of a given number of possibilities he selects a few gracious contours and discreet, harmonious, or cleverly daring colours, and these he recombines with directness and propriety. His message, if he may be said to possess one, is frank and specific not profound or imaginative. It is purely as a painter that he claims attention, and as a painter his position is incontestable. While he shows intuition, rather than insight, few who occupy themselves with external aspects betray his ready sensibility to impressions of every description. That he is also gifted with the requisite emotional depth and sincerity for the higher forms of artistic expression is amply proved by the canvas known as 'Father and Daughter,' an endearing version of the painter and his little Eileen which thus far marks the epitome of his supple, assured mastery of the essentials of portraiture. Nevertheless, despite its technical charm and its sense of urbanity, despite the fact that this art occasionally approaches the sphere of such delicately versatile feminists as Blanche, de La Gandara, or Helleu, it is, at bottom, an art which is simple, subjective, and lyrical. Though the least obviously Scotch of all the Glasgow men, Lavery, after his own fashion, is equally typical. His Continental training and the detachment which is supposed to result therefrom have not robbed him of that touch of knight-errantry which must have been his by right of birth. Explicit and contemporary as they often are, there seems gently to cling about these likenesses a hint of bygone chivalry. It is manifestly impossible for Lavery to depict, or even to see, ugliness. Beauty is more to him than character, and in his eyes there is little difference between beggar lass and duchess. Leaving to others the field of history and of myth, he has, in his

own particular domain, proved himself not less idealistic and not less national. He has merely rendered more intimate and personal that same poetic vision shared so generously by his brothers of the brush.

The attitude of Lavery toward the Royal Academy is quite in accord with the stand taken by most of the Scottish chieftains. Although fame has been won and their position in the world of art is secure, they have never wholly forgotten the stiff uphill fight which was once their lot. A certain number have established themselves in Edinburgh or in London, yet even they do not widely diverge either in spirit or in fact from their original starting-point. While the Glasgow belligerents were unique in Great Britain, they were not an isolated phenomenon, but participants in a great movement which came to simultaneous focus in numerous European capitals. The organization of the New Salon in Paris, the founding of the Libre Esthétique in Brussels, the various Secessionist societies which quickly sprang up throughout Germany and Austria, and even the milder demonstration which resulted in the birth of the New English Art Club in London all belong to the same stirring epoch. Yet in no quarter have the principles of modern aesthetic advancement taken firmer root than in the smoky city on the Clyde. In the decorative and industrial arts as well as in architecture and painting Glasgow is to-day more positive and progressive than ever. A distinctly healthy initiative characterizes all this work. While closely allied to the current elastic, serpentine evolution of various artistic forms, its achievements are personal, original, and not without commendable sobriety and stateliness. A new association known as the Glasgow Society of Artists has recently been inaugurated, and the entire movement is daily gaining strength, continuity, and general, as well as local importance. For many reasons it is impossible to escape the conviction that there still remains much that is free and

unfettered about these men of the North. They have been hailed as ultra modern, they are supposed to have learned not a little from the Frenchmen and the Japanese, yet one and all they are eager, daring romanticists. Arthur Melville—King Arthur, as the boys used to call him—had a viking's passion for the South, and the sonorous canvases of Hornel suggest the richness of an ancient missal. Countless intimations seem to prove that the old spirit is not dead, that voices long silent speak again. Nor is there, after all, such a vast difference between these latter-day poets in line and tone and the scribes and bards of former times. For they, too, like those who have gone before, look upon the present with wondering eyes, their hearts deep-anchored in the past.

GIOVANNI SEGANTINI



GIOVANNI SEGANTINI

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

[*Courtesy of Signor Grubicy, Milan*]

GIOVANNI SEGANTINI

ONE stormy summer night as two Milanese peasants were hurrying homeward through the darkness and drenching rain, their lantern chanced to flash upon the form of a boy crouched at the foot of a tree by the roadside. They questioned the waif, and finding that he had run away from home and was trudging to France, they bundled him into a hamper in the bottom of the cart and jogged on toward the shelter of their farm. The boy meanwhile fell asleep, and when he awoke found himself in a snug cot, being cared for by a stout, kind woman who gave him dry clothes and a bowl of steaming soup made of rice and beans. Sitting by the fire were the two men who had found him along the roadway, and when the wight's shining black eyes were fully open, they asked him more questions. He told them of lonely days in a miserable attic room whence he could only see a patch of sky and the peaked roofs of the great city. He told them how his father had gone away and had never come back, and how every morning when his stepsister went to work she locked him in to spend the long hours alone until her return at nightfall. From his window perch he once heard the women below tell of a boy who had gone all the way to France afoot and found wealth and fame, and that morning he slipped out and started off toward France to seek his fortune. Standing in the bright Piazza Castillo his father had often shown him the straight, white road down which the French and Piedmontese troops poured into Milan, and that was of

course the way over the mountains and into France. The boy had only a crust of bread to munch along the highroad, but the air was brisk and he tramped stoutly on, passing villages and now and then quenching his thirst at fountains or wayside streams. The faint blue haze toward the Alps beckoned to him, and within throbbed the hope of somehow achieving great deeds once France were reached. But as the day wore along and the sun beat cruelly on the parched Lombard plain, the little head began to ache, the legs to grow stiff and weary, and the feet sore. At last he sank down in the shade of a near-by tree and fell asleep, only to awake in fright at the crash of the oncoming storm. So touched were the simple farm folk by the boy's story that they had not the heart to take him back to Milan, particularly as he vowed he would run away again if they did. The following day the women clipped his dark, clustering locks, disclosing a face which one of them exclaimed was " like the son of a King of France." And, it being agreed that he must turn his hand to something, they sent him off to tend swine on the hillside.

This little swineherd, who afterward became known to the world as Giovanni Segantini, was born 15 January 1858, at Arco, near the Lago di Garda, in the Austrian Tyrol. Like most inhabitants of the Trentino he was Italian in race, character, and language. His rugged peasant father was a carpenter by trade, and not an overthrifty one, for his delicate young wife was forced to help matters along by selling fruit and vegetables. Giovanni's early years were passed in a hut beside the swift-flowing Scara. He was a frail, pallid child, with great, vivid eyes which eagerly caught the play of light on brook and meadow or the changing splendour of giant dolomite peaks that towered toward the sky. Of those first few years at Arco he remembered only the sunlit garden, his being rescued from drowning by a long-limbed mountaineer, and the sad, languid beauty of a

mother who had been an invalid from the boy's birth. "I can see her now," he afterward said, "with my mind's eye; she was beautiful, not like the sunrise or midday, but like the sunset in spring." When he was but five years of age this tender, suffering being faded from sight, and within a few weeks his father returned to Milan, where he had left a son and daughter by a former marriage.

And thus began those bitter, sombre days which were to weave their loneliness, their vague terror, and their wistful hunger for light and love into the web of Giovanni's soul. All he heard as he played about the bare room or tried to keep himself warm by a miserable charcoal stove were the voices of countless bells clanging about. All he could see was the leaden sky of a Milanese winter. To be neglected by his stepsister and flogged by the house porter for his innocent pranks was hardly the care Giovanni craved. Small wonder that when spring came he sighed for the little garden at Arco, the patches of green fields, the brooks, the sky, the blue waters of the Lago di Garda. Small wonder that before a second summer dragged past he had slipped away from the wretched tenement in the Via San Simone, impelled by the aching hope that life must somewhere be brighter and kinder than it had yet been. During the years he passed as shepherd with the goodly Lombard contadini the boy grew strong of frame and limb. He learned to love the flocks he tended and to note their form, their colour, their ways while grazing, while at the drinking trough, or in the stall. Before long he began to trace rough sketches of them on flat stones or walls, with bits of charcoal. The plain folk about him were both puzzled and charmed by these lifelike efforts. Yet the real impulse toward expression, the first definite yearning with its faint promise of fulfilment, did not come until one day when he chanced to hear a poor peasant mother sighing over her dead child,—"Ah, if I only had a picture of her, she was so beauti-

ful!" There is no hint now of what this portrait was like; it is enough to know that the boy's genius found its earliest unfolding through love, and sympathy, and pity. And to the very last he was touched by the sight of suffering in man or beast. It is the call to which he always responded with deepest, tenderest insight.

The desire to make something of himself, coupled with a longing to see his stepsister, at length drew the runaway back to Milan, slender in pocket but rich in the wishes of those who bade him godspeed. After a time he managed to enter the evening School of Ornament at the Brera and began his career copying paintings and drawing from bas-reliefs by Donatello. Yet here in Milan life proved the same cruel struggle it had been in former years. The boy worked at whatever he could find to do by day, and at night attended his classes. He was too poor to buy himself a box of colours, so poor, indeed, that he was arrested by the police and committed to the Patronato for abandoned children. While there they taught him the trade of a cobbler, but also allowed him to continue his studies. When he left the Patronato, which still possesses certain of his early efforts, he would often wander aimlessly about the streets, or from his garret window watch the sun sink below the dark rim of roofs and towers. Music aroused in him a sort of fiery ecstasy, and his whole being was tortured by the caressing, insistent accents of love. Above all he felt surging within the need for some clearer, ampler form of expression. Later, while taking a course of elementary figure drawing at the Accademia and also working for Teltamangi, a local painter of church banners, he executed his first picture. The colours had been given him by a friendly grocer for whom he had painted a sign, the canvas was a sugar bag dipped in oil and stretched on a rough frame, but there was something fresh and individual about this youth's rendering of the 'Choir of the Church of Sant' Antonio.' There was a

AVE MARIA A TRASBORDO

By Giovanni Segantini

[*Private possession, Cologne*]

new vibrancy to the light which streamed in the high window on the left and bathed the carved stalls, the dark wainscoting, and the white-surpliced choir boy standing before the lectern. Though knowing nothing of divisionism, he had instinctively placed touches of pure pigment side by side upon the canvas without first mixing them on the palette, thus allowing the separate tones to recompose on the retina. He had no scientific theories on the subject; he merely found that by so doing he could secure better effects. It was before the practice of Monet and the French impressionists had become known in Italy, and the boy had come independently by a discovery second only in painting to the employment of perspective.

The picture aroused interest, was exhibited at the Brera in 1879, and obtained a silver medal. More than this, it enlisted the notice of Signor Vittore Grubicy, who continued Segantini's cherished and helpful friend throughout his career. Yet the young artist did not at the time develop further his conquest of suffused, palpitating light. He proceeded to paint in the usual manner, but with crude vigour, studies in still-life and in genre. Among the former the most notable is ' The Dead Hero,' vaguely recalling Mantegna's ' Dead Christ,' which he must have seen on the dark walls of the Brera. He next took a studio in the Via San Marco, but was already disgusted with the art of the day and with its preceptors, and raged hotly at both. His contempt for his teachers was such that once, on being asked what he would do if he were as great an artist as his master, he promptly replied, " Hang myself! " As he acquired grasp and decision he felt that his lot lay among different scenes. Moreover, the love of the open was strong upon him; he longed to be back among his shepherds and herdsmen. In 1882, having married the sister of his fellow-artist, Carlo Bugatti, he forsook the fog-ridden city of Leonardo, where he had known only tribulation and pain, and settled at Pusiano, in the fertile Brianza, not far from Como.

Here in the fragrant Garden of Lombardy, dotted by cream-white villas, terraces, and redolent parterres, rich in grain and wine, Segantini perfected the first phase of his development. He remained in the Brianza four years in all, and each year displayed a deeper, more penetrating sympathy with the quiet, bucolic life about him and a broader, surer translation of its spirit. If the scenes he now painted were for the most part sad, it was because the heart of the man had so long been open to sorrow and suffering. The vision of that which lay without was transfigured by the pathos from within. His chosen themes were the weariness of the peasant after a day's toil, the monotony of his life, his trials, and his cares. More than all he loved to picture the bond between man and beast and the common feeling of maternity in both. Despite the fertility of the Brianza the labourer's lot is a hard one, and its least accent finds reflection in these humble episodes painted with the lingering tenderness of one who had himself been a shepherd of the flock.

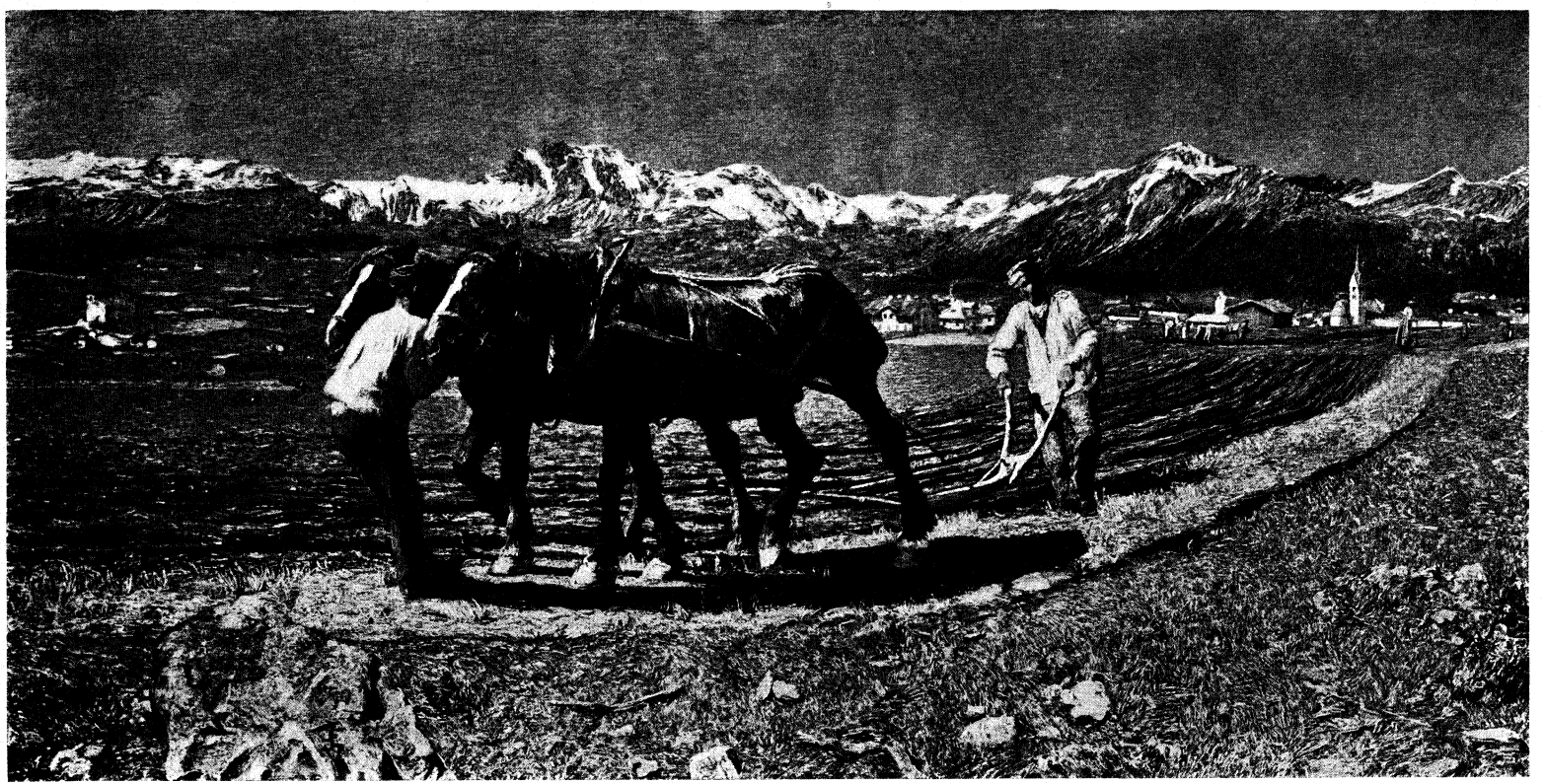
In ' The Last Task of the Day ' heads are bowed and backs burdened as two heavy figures carry home their load of faggots at dusk. ' Sad Hours ' is a subtler but not less affecting version of that utter fatigue which overcomes the peasant when the day's toil is done and purple shadows creep softly forth to enfold all things. The pious resignation of the girl's attitude, the lowing cow in the foreground, the sheep crowding to the shelter, and the fringe of Brianza hills bathed in opal glow all witness the delicate, pervading pathos of Segantini's art. In ' One More ' maternity is touched upon in appealing terms with a young shepherdess carrying in her arms a lamb which has been born as the sheep wind homeward under a threatening sky. Throughout all the paintings of this period, whether they depict ' Potato Harvest ' or ' Sheep-Shearing,' or transcribe the many sorrows and scant joys of rural life in the Brianza, runs the same idyllic melancholy. The note is never forced, but it is never

absent, even when love is touched upon as in ' A Kiss at the Fountain.' The two canvases which first brought Segantini's name before the public were ' Ave Maria a Trasbordo,' painted at Pusiano when the artist was but five-and-twenty, and ' At the Tether,' finished shortly before he left the Brianza. The one shows what for some time was to embody his deepest reflection of human sentiment, the other was his earliest and purest rendering of reality. When sent to an exhibition at Milan ' Ave Maria a Trasbordo ' was rejected, but the following year, at the Amsterdam Exhibition of 1883, it was awarded the gold medal. The masterly drawing and composition of this picture together with its wealth of limpid colouring assured success quite apart from the actual beauty of the scene—a flat lake-boat laden with sheep, a far-off bell tolling the evening hymn, the shepherd resting on his oars, and the peasant madonna bending over the child at her breast and softly murmuring "Ave Maria, gratia plena." In ' At the Tether,' which was painted at Caglio, in the Valassina, and which shows a herd of cattle at the milking ground with a low range of hills beyond, Segantini displays the breadth, reserve, and close study of locality which were to distinguish his later work. He here begins to subordinate the human element, to find that nature alone suffices, or nearly so. The canvas was exhibited at Amsterdam in 1887, and at Bologna, and was afterward purchased by the Italian Government for the National Gallery of Modern Art at Rome.

All through the Brianza sojourn Segantini had been growing nearer and nearer to reality, had been catching with more firmness and surety the shifting nuances of form and of colour. From his windows he watched the lingering sunset radiance, or among the pastures studied those swift changes of atmospheric effect which characterize the country around Como and Lecco. He moved about at will, from Pusiano to Castagnola, from there to Carella, and thence to Caglio. His life was simple and happy;

he saw no one save his own family, and spent his days recording with new clarity and fullness of vision the nobility of labour, the beauty of sorrow, and the eternal kinship of all creatures of the field. He painted only that which he loved, and each brush-stroke seems a heart-throb. Certain analytical spirits have insisted upon calling this the artist's Millet period, but it requires more than a similarity of subject to justify the comparison. He never saw a painting by Millet, and only knew the Barbizon master's majestic or brutish peasant heroics through a set of engravings given him by Signor Grubicy. Mauve he knew in the same way, but resembles him merely in that both painted sheep. Nor was there in the art of the modern Lombards any message for him. Cremona he admired, and Ferragutti was perhaps nearest in feeling, but Segantini lay beyond their sphere of influence. Like Previati he was bent upon working out his own artistic salvation, in finding his own emotional language. He was essentially self-taught, and came into maturity through a passionate inner necessity which finally broke forth in full power and effulgence. He recalls no man and owed little to any.

Finding that he was familiar with the pastoral scenes of the Brianza, Segantini next looked higher and wandered farther. The Alps with their clear atmosphere and sharp outlines seemed to lure him from the soft masses of vapour floating over lake and pasture, from the four caressing winds of Como. He wanted most of all to seize the secrets of that light which had ever dazzled and beckoned him, and which for him was the source and soul of all beauty. Leaving their children behind for the time being, the painter and his wife set out on foot and wandered for weeks in search of some spot where they might be with nature in her sublimest aspects. In the high, cloud-capped village of Livigno, northeast of the Bernina Pass, they thought to have found a haven, but because they failed to attend Mass the day after their arrival, the bigoted natives drove them from the



PLOUGHING IN THE ENGADINE

By Giovanni Segantini

[*The New Pinakothek, Munich*]

place. They then went over the Bernina to Silvaplana, and from Silvaplana along the Julier Pass to Savognino, on the road to Coire. Here among the Grisons, where winter frowns forever and summer is but a fleeting supplication, Segantini remained for the next eight years. The Switzerland which he found in the Engadine, and put upon canvas at all hours and during all seasons, was not the Switzerland of Chillon and Tell's Chapel. It was not the Switzerland of mammoth hotels, operatic peasants, cuckoo clocks, and toy cattle. It was something unknown to the pedantic Calame or the characteristic Töpffer. Segantini stood apart from all that had gone before. He had eyes to see that which lay deep within the faltering heart of man and strength to look with confidence toward God's dim eternity. And what he sought to picture was the one in its relation to the other—the spectacle of life flickering faintly in the midst of impassivity and death.

Existence in the Higher Alps has always been and must always remain a matter of sufferance. Nature is here at her grandest and her cruellest, and man's struggle for life and livelihood is remorselessly intensified. The dull crash of an avalanche or the roar of a devastating torrent quickly change the song on his lips to a prayer—a prayer often answered by annihilation. It is a bitter, unequal contest for man or beast, and they inevitably turn to one another, linked together in mute solicitude, shrinking from nature which seems the enemy of both. Such is the country into which Segantini had climbed, and such are the scenes which he found at hand—man poor in all save hope, nature rich in beauty but chary of her blessings. He entered this new and luminous kingdom timidly, painting at first a few bits in the Brianza manner of broad, flat tones, but soon modified his method according to prevailing conditions. He found that the problem of suggesting flower-dotted foregrounds and the clear, sharp contours of distant ranges boldly outlined

in this translucent atmosphere demanded a new solution. Reverting to the path opened with his boyish ' Choir of the Church of Sant' Antonio,' he gradually evolved a procedure which combined the brilliant, shimmering effects of impressionism with a consistency of outline which always made his drawing notable for strength and continuity. The secret of his triumph over baffling conditions lay in that, wherever necessary, he broke or conserved colour and line. The basis of his technique was not, as with the French pointillists, a series of dots, but a succession of short, multi-coloured ridges running parallel with each other. That which helped him equally was an infallible sense of selection. He never painted the unpaintable. Unlike timid gentlemen such as Baud-Bovy and Robinet who had long pictured the Alps from the safety of valleys below, Segantini met them openly, face to face. He painted them from their own level, where, instead of appearing as isolated peaks, they broke about him like billows, with now and then a wrinkled brow rising above the crest.

Studies in sentiment or landscape on a restricted scale, such as ' On the Balcony,' ' Knitting,' ' Rest in the Shade,' or ' A Cow Drinking,' were but the prelude to a series of grand Alpine panoramas which remain Segantini's chief contribution to art. Whatever be the claims of his earlier work, it is certain that with ' Ploughing in the Engadine,' ' Spring in the Alps,' ' Alpine Pastures,' and ' Spring Pastures ' he attained his fullest vision of definite, external beauty expressed in its simplest, most enduring terms. This mountain Hesiod seems in truth the story which had been given him to tell mankind. The first of these canvases, ' Ploughing in the Engadine,' already proves how accurate was the artist's rendering of all forms of life there among the stony uplands where nature is so strong and man so weak. Though details of soil and vegetation, of peak and scarp, are exactly studied, it is the spirit of the scene which holds the final

appeal. Modern art shows nothing similar to the plastic dignity of this pair of horses straining at the plough, the labourers guiding their submissive efforts, the rim of cottages in the distance, and the frame of glistening, blue-white ranges. The austerity and restraint of such compositions are poetized and humanized in the succeeding canvases of the series, each of which records the delicate, transient grace of the Alpine spring. They show azure skies, carpets of gentians, daisies, and alpenrosen, a few figures or a grazing herd in the foreground, and always, beyond, snow-capped mountains seamed by silent, yellow-rolling glacier streams. Each blossom, each pebble reflects the scintillating glory of a sun which bathes and brightens all things, which gives light in abundance, but, alas, scant heat. So thrilled was the painter by this iridescent beauty that he would often, in his mountain walks, sink upon his knees in ecstasy, or bend and kiss the flowers in his path.

Yet this radiance is short-lived, and for seven or eight months of each year in the Upper Engadine man and beast are huddled together in weather-tight shelters. This dark and tedious indoor existence Segantini has pictured with homely fidelity in ' The Spinning Wheel,' ' The Sheepfold,' and ' Mothers.' In fact no phase of mountain life escaped him or failed to arouse his interest and abiding pity. He lived out-of-doors all the while, painting direct from nature and rarely making preliminary studies. He passed his days not shut up in the studio with a north light, but on the heights of the Grisons, working now at one subject, now at another, as nature suggested the desired effect. When fogs floated up from the Val Bregaglia and settled about him, shrouding nature as with the mantle of God, or when the afterglow had faded into night he would lock his unfinished canvases in stout iron cases and tramp downward, guided by the sound of tinkling bells or the far glow from cottage fireside. Few of his pictures ever saw the inside of that little chalet whose

windows opened to the skies of Switzerland, Italy, and Austria, and whose rooms were bare of all artistic pretence. They were carried down mountain paths on the backs of sturdy herdsmen and placed in carts to wend their way to Chiavenna and thence by rail to Milan, Turin, or Venice. By 1894, or about the time he moved still higher and settled at Maloja, six thousand feet above sea-level, Segantini's work was becoming better known to the outside world. Vienna, Munich, Berlin, and even Paris gazed with curious eyes upon those unfamiliar scenes executed with a direct brilliancy of method which recalled the early mosaics. Yet the personality of the artist continued a mystery. At Maloja and at Soglio he was even further removed from contact with the public, and never left his mountain home save for an occasional trip to Milan, where his daughter Bianca was attending school. Few beyond his wife, children, and chance friends ever caught a glimpse of this dark, stalwart man with torrents of hair and the beard of an Assyrian king. He naively wore a grotesque outing suit, and never posed in cafés or paraded about at picture exhibitions. His only public honours were the scattered medals awarded his paintings in distant cities, and a complimentary luncheon given him, during the last year of his life, by a few admirers in the little town hall of Pontresina, when he made a speech full of gratitude and frank idealism. For the rest, he lived alone with nature, his art, and his Maker.

At first his work had been subjective, but later, under the influence of prolonged solitude and random reading, its form became more and more symbolistic. Though possessing rich natural gifts he was singularly illiterate, and until the age of seventeen could neither read nor write. In after years he became something of a bibliophile, was fond of discussing phases of religion, aesthetics, and socialism, and even wrote for the newspapers and reviews. Yet it was an inheritance into which he had come too late. He never acquired maturity of mind; his

THE UNNATURAL MOTHERS

By Giovanni Segantini

[*K. K. Ministerium, Vienna*]

ideas were blurred and full of juvenile unreason. As he painted alone on the heights, often clad in furs and with the colours actually freezing on the canvas, he wrestled in his untaught way with questions of duty and destiny, of reward and punishment. Fantastic counterparts of these concepts rose from the white wastes or slipped from dark crevices and filled his vision with beings half human, half mythical. Against an unrelenting background of mystery and fate he beheld piteous incarnations of tenderness and of terror. Though he continued to paint with rigid verity the same Alpine landscapes, they were peopled by vague, flying forms whose pathos or forlorn anguish add a fresh note to art. These fleeting creatures with streaming hair and rose-tipped breasts uncovered to the bitterest winds had come not from the cypress groves of Italy, the caverns of the Rhine, or the gardens of Kelmscott Manor. They were born of a soul whose torments as well as whose crystal serenity found expression in terms of the most poignant and individual beauty. Tentative bits of idealization such as 'A Rose Leaf,' the somewhat robust 'Child of Love,' and the delicately Milanese 'Angel of Life,' were succeeded by canvases whose technical perfection and imaginative force place Segantini among master symbolists. Despite its richly flowered frame and wealth of vernal sunshine, 'Love at the Fountain of Life' verges on incongruity, but in 'The Punishment of Luxury,' 'Captive Mothers,' and 'The Source of Evil,' the image finds its inevitable form. Each represents a moral idea, but each holds a haunting beauty and fervour quite apart from specific morality. Whether they embody Hindu myth, or Dantesque legend, or spring direct from the artist's brain, they all reflect nature in the Grisons. The fanciful is given a setting uncompromising in its fidelity to fact.

In 'The Punishment of Luxury,' which pictures the penalty of sterility, the souls of sinning women, as sorrowful, wingless creatures, are wafted pitilessly about above an infinitude of ice

and snow, gleaming blue and white, silver and gold, in the sinking sun. Another vast, snow-covered expanse, dotted with twisted trees, shows the ' Unnatural Mothers ' condemned to expiate their crime in a bleak, wind-swept eternity of repentance and suffering. ' The Source of Evil,' which has vanity for its text, reveals Segantini's sense of the nude and the singular grace with which, when so moved, he could limn the female figure. Yet the trials and sorrows of the real world did not fade before the tortured magic of these evocations. During the period when he gave fantasy its freest sweep Segantini never lost touch with the outward, the objective. In ' The Sower ' and ' Haymaking,' he came as close to nature as before, and in a series of religious paintings, which number the prophetic ' Sorrow Comforted by Faith ' and ' The Home-Coming,' he touched the deepest emotions of the simple mountain folk whom he knew so well and whose lot he had so freely shared. Though he gazed into the unreal he could look upon reality with the same tender solicitude. Portraiture also occupied his attention at brief intervals, the best of his attempts in this direction being the seated three-quarter-length of Signor Vittore Grubicy, and the two or three mystical versions of his own shaggy head and searching eyes, each of which recalls the mask of the Forerunner.

From childhood Segantini had dreamed of France, and early in 1898 he formed a project for exhibiting at the Paris Exposition a large circular panorama which would embrace all aspects of life and nature in the Engadine. Considerable money was raised among the artist's devoted following, but the plan was finally abandoned as being unfeasible. He then decided to paint two large triptychs, one of which he practically finished; the other never passing beyond the stage of rough sketches. In order to paint his first triptych direct from nature he chose a spot on the Schafberg above St. Moritz, whence he might sweep

with a glance the entire Upper Engadine, the soaring peaks of the Roseg, the Morteratsch, and the Bernina, or watch, shining beneath like eyes of the sea, the blue lakes of Statz, Campfer, Silvaplana and Sils. He worked month after month with fervid exaltation, bringing nearer and nearer completion the panels entitled ' Life,' ' Nature,' and ' Death,' which were to epitomize his beloved Engadine in her fresh beauty, her brief maturity, and her snow-shrouded bereavement. The colouring was more luminous than ever, the study of natural forms more accurate, and the human element more consistent and appropriate. With delicate fancy he added an ornamental frieze showing chamois perched upon peaks, and medallions wherein decorative nude figures typify ' Alpenrose ' and ' Edelweiss,' flowers which had each season brought him such frank joy. Unfinished though it stands, the triptych proved his masterwork, his supreme and final offering.

In September 1899, the panels having meanwhile been brought down to the chalet, he determined to add a few touches on the heights where they had originally been painted. Though it had already begun to snow he would not be deterred by adverse weather. He must note again the play of light and shifting cloud, must read closer and closer nature's changing heart. On the eighteenth the little band started up from Pontresina and climbed the Schafberg, sturdy mountaineers bearing proudly and without a murmur their heavy burden. They would have done anything for this gentle, silent man, who was as intent as one of the watching Magi. The painter set to work with pathetic ardour, lodging in a deserted shepherd's hut, where his only comforts were a rude bed, a chair, and a portable stove. Round him lay glistening in the sun or sleeping silently under the shadow of God's hand the rock- and ice-riven splendour which he strove to perpetuate. He seemed happy, but was at times haunted by the image of death. The first night while

wandering on the mountain, he saw a falling star and remarked, "That means evil fortune."

Within a day or so he was taken ill, having been forced to drink melted snow, which induced a chill. Fever set in and a shepherd was sent below for medical aid. His friend, Dr. Bernhard, arrived from Samaden during the night with hands cut and bleeding from climbing the rocks to reach the stricken man. Later the painter's family came, bringing everything needful and summoning two German physicians who still lingered in the valley. They found him weak but hopeful, for a fortune-teller had once assured him that he would live to be the age of Titian. Symptoms of peritonitis were noted and a tardy operation was performed, but without avail. On the evening of the twenty-eighth he begged to be moved to the window that he might see the fire-tinted heights glowing about him. During the night his spirit hovered awhile on the borderland between the brightness which he had known and the vague beyond into which he had tried to peer. Yet no hand, however gentle or imploring, could stay the pallid Visitor once she had been summoned. He had given his life that the world might know what lay within the cold virginity of those eternal snows. He had striven, vainly it must be, to penetrate the impenetrable. As they bore him slowly down the slopes and laid him to rest in the little cemetery of Maloja, which he had painted with such fidelity in 'Sorrow Comforted by Faith,' every bell in the Engadine tolled sadly. There was not a pious soul throughout the valley who did not weep or exchange a heartfelt word with his neighbour. They all knew and all loved him who had come amongst them, and who had seemed even as one of themselves.

The path which he trod so firmly yet for so short a time is to-day being followed by a small but enthusiastic band of artists. His favourite pupil, Giovanni Giacometti, is continuing the spirit of his work, and upon his sons, Gottardo and Mario Segan-

tini, has in a measure fallen their father's mantle. Across the German, Austrian, and Italian frontiers he has found numerous imitators. Throughout the Grisons, and indeed the world, art has been enriched by this simple, heroic nature whose life has been fittingly honoured by a monument from the hands of Leonardo Bistolfi, himself as great a mystic naturalist as the man he has memorialized. From first to last the two guiding impulses of Segantini's being were the lyrical impulse and the devotional impulse. His whole existence had been spent in chanting the beauty and mystery of the world, and his eyes had never failed to look with tender compassion upon those who dwell therein. To the end he remained a fervent, imaginative child, loving light, loving colour, and craving that which was past or that which was yet to come. He was always harking back to the unfulfilled, or only half-fulfilled, visions and promises of an eager, wistful heart. Almost his final wishes were that he might see once again the little sunlit garden at Arco and follow the white road stretching away toward France.

GARI MELCHERS

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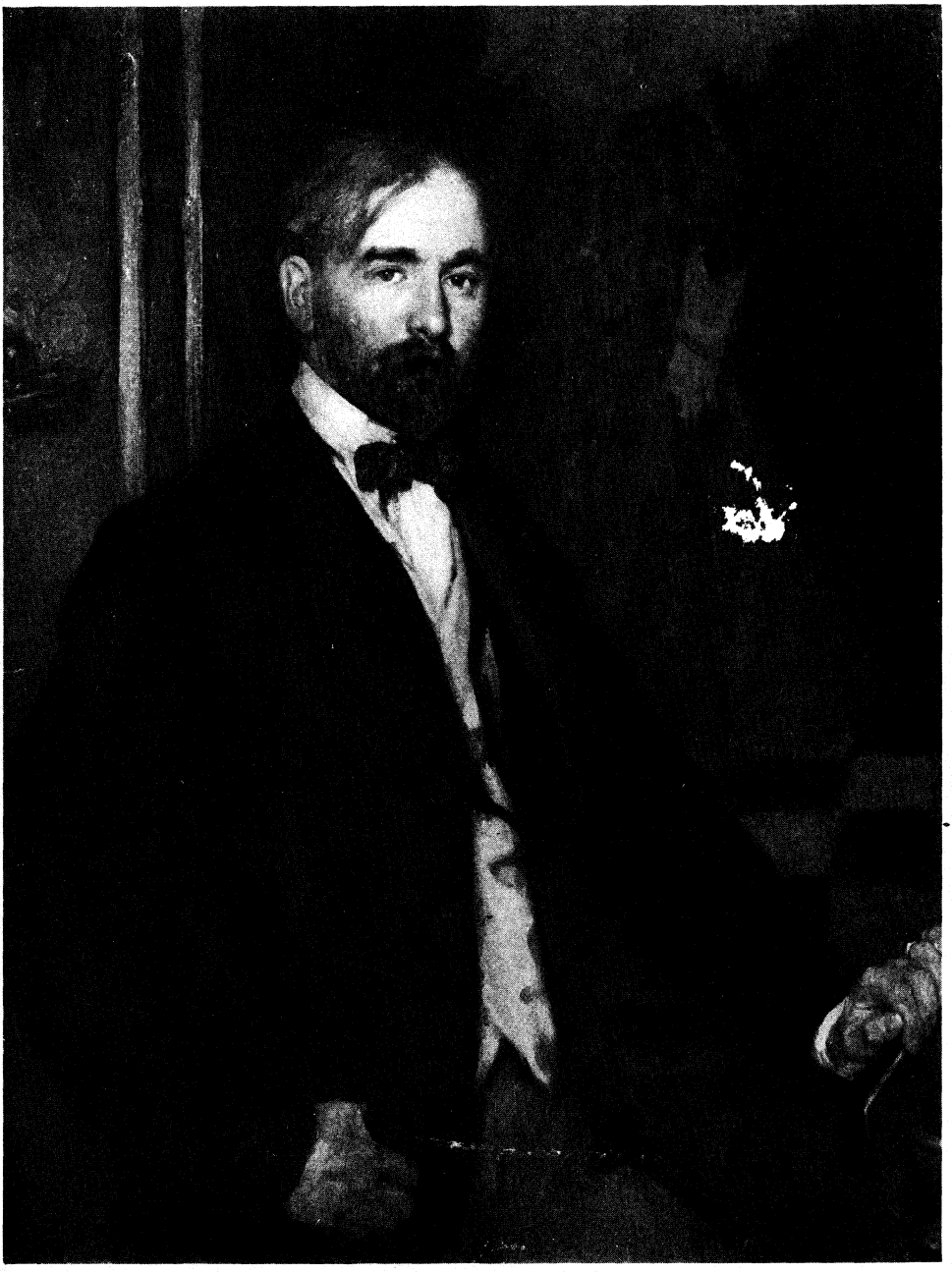


GARI MELCHERS

Portrait of the artist by J. J. Shannon

[*Courtesy of Mr. Shannon*]

GARI MELCHERS

NESTLED among the dunes of North Holland is a primitive and picturesque little studio. The spot is lonely and isolated. On one side chafes a menacing sea; on the other are the quiet waters of a broad canal. Round about wave masses of tall reed-grass; here and there is a stunted oak or pine, while above drift continually restless, moist-laden clouds. Over the doorway of this small, low-browed structure is written in crude, resolute characters the motto "Wahr und Klar." It is many years since this device was traced, yet those who have followed the rise of Gari Melchers still note the fact that the distinctive features of his art remain truth and clarity. Never, throughout a varied and productive career, has he forgotten either of those simple words which have themselves so well withstood the change of seasons and the touch of time. It was not from mere chance or momentary caprice that such a text came to be inscribed above the portals of this dune-top studio which overlooks by turns the tiled roofs of Egmond and the yellow sands of the North Sea. "Wahr und Klar" is not the motto of a single individual. It is the battle-cry of the most vigorous and salutary manifestation in the history of nineteenth-century art. The turbulent, intolerant champion of verity, the man who, more than anyone, demolished convention and established the supremacy of free, unfettered observation—Gustave Courbet, of course—was not a colourist in the present acceptation of the term. He still painted nature in the sooty hues of

the galleries. He still believed that shadows were black. Although his influence was prodigious, and though for a time he swept everything before him both in Paris and on that memorable visit to Munich on the eve of the Franco-Prussian war, yet he had found but half the truth. He knew the Wahr but not the Klar of modern painting. It remained for more sensitive, more complex talents to apply to the entire range of natural phenomena that power of analysis which Courbet brought to bear upon the merely objective.

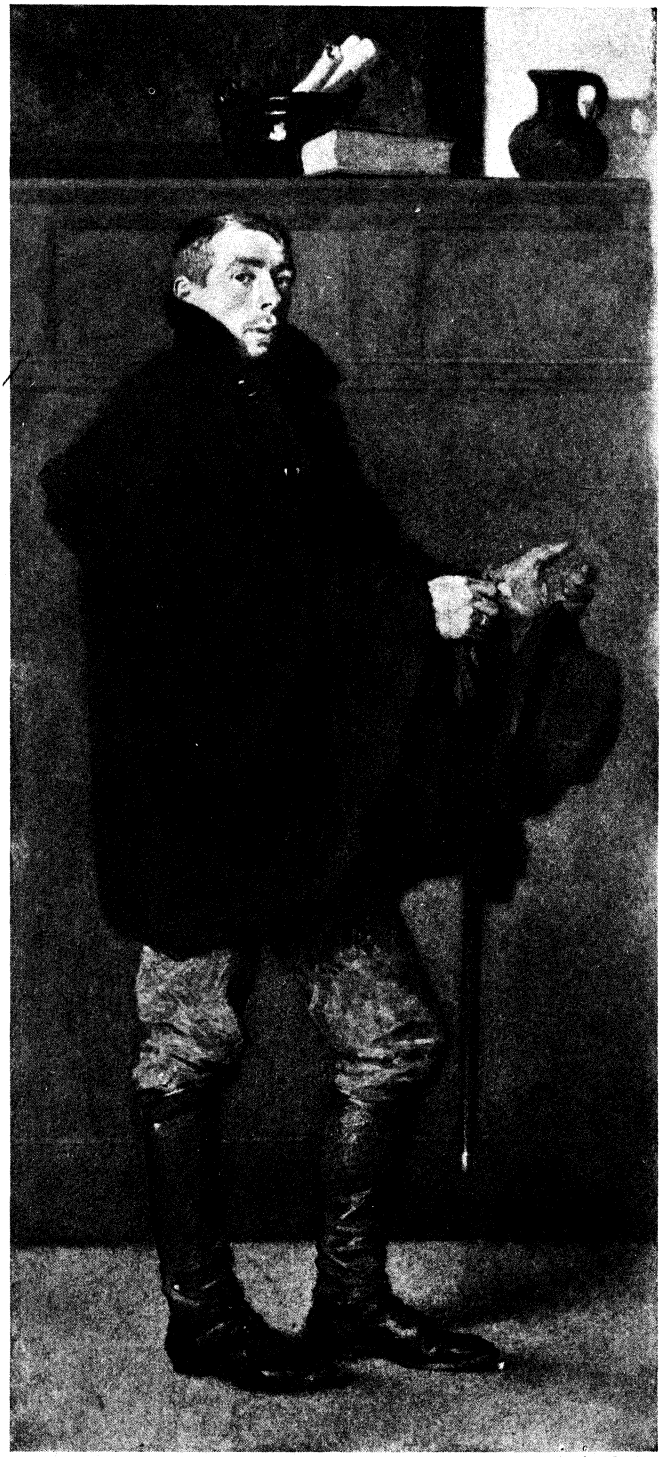
That trembling, translucent sunlight which has so long bathed and brightened the world has been known to art but a few brief years. It is only since the days of Manet that painters have studied its changing glimmer or stippled upon canvas its scintillant glory. For centuries landscape and figure as well had been smothered in brown sauce and blackened by layers of bitumen. With but few exceptions all painters until Manet's time looked at nature through the mahogany tints of the masters. Correggio saw the tender evanescence of light, and Velázquez felt the magic of its respiration, but they stand almost alone amid a sombre assemblage. Save for such scattered instances ancient art is art in a vacuum. Though Manet in his early days was himself of this number, the battle had been won by the time he so pathetically left the field. Close in the wake of Manet came the stolid, patient Monet, and along with him Renoir, Pissarro, Sisley, and numerous lesser luminarists who quickly flooded studio and gallery with a radiance ever near at hand, yet until then so strangely neglected. When Pissarro and Monet returned from London obscure and unregarded, the cause had few sponsors. The slender and often dubious little band used to meet nightly at the café de la Nouvelle Athénée in order to discuss various theories of colour. Though Baudelaire and Zola manfully aided them, and other recruits stepped forward, they were for the most part compelled to bear alone the com-

bined derision of press and public. What was even more rueful they were scarcely able to subsist on the proceeds of their sales, canvases by Sisley, Renoir, and Pissarro bringing with difficulty twenty francs apiece. By dint of persistence and good fortune the cause, however, triumphed inside a score or so of years, and the men who were at first cruelly ridiculed became in due course the most cherished of modern masters. Yet the conquest of light was not confined to the palpitating out-of-doors, to purple haystack or azure strip of water; it was also carried within. Degas found that it filtered through the windows of the foyer or flared into the faces of his corps-de-ballet. Besnard caught its flicker from lamp or fireplace. Thus the normal glare of day was not enough for experimentalists intoxicated by this new discovery. They annexed artificial light as well, each painter revealing after his own fashion the fluid ambience of an all-pervading ether.

While as though through sympathetic magic, spots of light sprang up in different parts of the world, such as with Segantini in the clear uplands of the Italian Alps, with Émile Claus in Belgium, or with Sorolla along the glistening seastrand of Valencia, Paris continued the chief centre of radiation. To certain American painters who at the time were living and studying in France belongs the honour of having been among the first foreigners to grasp the significance of a departure which has revolutionized almost every phase of tonal expression. Miss Cassatt, Childe Hassam, Edmund C. Tarbell, F. W. Benson, and George Hitchcock were each pioneer exponents of vibrant, broken colour. Though none save Hassam went so far as Monet, or remained so faithful to the exactions of extreme impressionism, they were all part of the same movement. Allied to them through ties of birth, association, and general artistic aims is Gari Melchers. At first sight this flexible though positive personality seems to present serious difficulties in the way of pre-

cise classification. It is at once apparent that he is neither a Franco-American imitator nor an implicit disciple of that heroic little group whose starting-point was a shabby café in the Batignolles and who have at last forced the portals of the Louvre. That which differentiates Gari Melchers alike from the country of his birth and from France, the amiable stepmother of artistic America, is his complicated ancestry. Germanic, with Dutch, French, and American affiliations, he reverts perhaps unconsciously to the predominant strain in his nature. It was from Germany that he originally came, and it was from a German art atmosphere whence he journeyed, like his compatriots once-removed—Max Liebermann and Fritz von Uhde —to Paris, where he absorbed, as they before him had done, the gospel of light. It is impossible to explain, except on such grounds, the sane, straightforward naturalism of Melchers's manner brightened as it is by the aurate brilliancy of the latter-day palette. Any attempt to localize him as an American, a Frenchman, or a Hollander must necessarily prove inadequate. He has resided by turns in each country, and from each has taken something, yet the basis of his aesthetic being is Teutonic. Because he had long painted Dutch subjects, Americans naively considered him a Dutchman, but the Germans, with surer artistic perceptions, knew better. It is in Germany that he is most esteemed, and it is beside such masters as Liebermann, von Uhde, Leibl, von Bartels, and their successors that he takes rank. In the last analysis he stands as a modified Teuton.

In point of unvarying placidity and uniform success few careers can compare with that of Gari Melchers. From the beginning there were no harsh parental objections, nor in after days were there any periods of romantic anguish or pathetic probation. The stimulus of poverty and the sting of zealous emulation were equally unnecessary to his development. That which particularly characterizes his progress has always been



THE MAN WITH THE CLOAK

By Cari Melchers

[*National Gallery of Modern Art, Rome*]

an instinctive consciousness of what he wished to do and the way it could best be accomplished. Born in Detroit, 11 August 1860, he seems to have evinced no ambition apart from an early and resolutely expressed desire to become a painter. His father, who had been a sculptor, a pupil of Carpeaux and Étex, cordially sympathized with his son's artistic longings. When, at the age of seventeen, the boy went abroad to study, the only stipulation made was that the youthful aspirant should not go to Paris. The somnolent seclusion of Düsseldorf was deemed less pernicious and disturbing, so the first three years of his apprenticeship were passed under the guidance of von Gebhardt and other approved apostles of precedent. Among his fellow-pupils were Kampf, Vogel, and Hans Herrmann, and while manifestly a promising student, the young man gave no indication of unusual ability.

Matters were different, however, when, thoroughly grounded in the elements of draughtsmanship and painting, Gari Melchers, at twenty, decided to complete his training in Paris. Taking no special pains to acquaint the family of his movements, he quietly entered the Julian Academy. Wholly unawares the admirable janitor of French art had opened his doors to a remarkable newcomer, who, in response to the tonic atmosphere of the capital, soon made his presence felt. His studies were regarded as exceptional, and both under Boulanger and Lefebvre, and later at the Beaux-Arts, his advance can best be measured by the rapidity with which he outdistanced his classmates, Rochegrosse alone holding his own beside the young Düsseldorfer. They were picturesque and diverting days, those early 'eighties when Gari Melchers frequented the Paris ateliers and attended the famous Cours Yvon. The American girl had not as yet broken down the barriers of the Quarter and complacently seated herself beside the youth of her own and other lands. That spontaneous gaiety which has since fluttered away before her

rumpled skirt and spotted apron was still at its height. If Melchers and his contemporaries dwell with special fragrance upon this period it is possibly because they have more to recall than recent students—or is it the enchantment of a more extended perspective?

Meantime there were of course numerous innocuous escapades, notably a trip with two atelier companions to Italy via Marseilles, when spirits ran so high and funds so low that the trio were obliged to resort to the most grotesque expedients in order to complete their journey. But for the most part the young artist from overseas felt drawn toward more serious matters. Deeply impressed by the quiet asceticism of monastic life he passed some weeks in a Trappist monastery at Casamare near Naples. Possessing a heart always open to the suffering nobility of toil he naturally came under the influence of Bastien-Lepage, whose message was at that period exerting its poignant though prescribed appeal. It is with particular pleasure, almost with reverence, that he looks back upon a long and intimate friendship with Puvis de Chavannes, and to certain Tuesday evenings spent in the unpretentious home of Camille Saint-Saëns in the rue Monsieur-le-Prince. At the latter place he used to meet Mme. Henri Gréville, the novelist, and the quaint and courtly mother of the composer. On these occasions Saint-Saëns would often play his ' Danse Macabre ' and other selections with that same eloquent brilliancy which so charmed the exacting Wagner circle at Wahnfried. Yet he was meanwhile working faithfully at his profession, and to the Salon of 1882 sent his first picture, entitled ' The Letter,' which had been painted in Brittany and which already displayed the dominant qualities of his art—his passion for colour, his accurate powers of observation and of characterization, and his supple mastery of light. The following season he exhibited two more canvases, which were well hung and favourably spoken of, and thus, when he

decided to return to America for a brief visit during the ensuing year, it was obvious that his student days had drawn to their close.

On again finding himself in Paris it was Melchers's intention to reside some time in Italy, but the cholera preventing, he moved northward, passing through Bruges and Ostend, and finally, toward autumn, settling in Holland. Fascinated by the unspoiled simplicity of the place, he acquired two properties at Egmond, one being his residence, at Egmond-aan-den-Hoef, the other his studio, at Egmond-aan-Zee. It was from this same seaside refuge that he quickly began sending those sincere, straightforward, and frankly human canvases which to-day hang in the leading galleries of Europe and America, and which have won their author more and higher distinctions than have thus far fallen to the lot of any American-born painter. It was not through mere accident that Gari Melchers came to live and labour so long and gratefully in the land of Rembrandt, Ruisdael, and Hobbema. It was not alone the homely picturesqueness of peasant or fisherman, the vast, mottled skies, or the play of constantly diffused light which attracted him to Holland. It was also the sterling artistic traditions of the country itself. There was surely something in his own nature which responded to that sturdy realistic impetus which, since the seventeenth century, has proved the balance wheel of European painting. Instinctively he perpetuated and extended this same tradition. With more robustness, less sentimentality, and a splendid, almost primal colour-sense he painted Holland life and scene as the Dutch themselves had never dreamed of doing. Best of all, his palette was clean and fresh. That heavy, golden-brown opacity which was the legacy of Rembrandt and his school did not darken any of Gari Melchers's canvases. His Holland was not the Holland of grey, damp autumn days—the Holland of convention—but a Holland swept by the brisk north wind or

brightened by the pearly radiance of springtime. Even when he painted a stretch of winter landscape or the whitewashed interior of some bare church the magic of light was always upon him. It was not in a spirit of half-fulfilled promise, but in a spirit of resolute accomplishment, that " Wahr und Klar " was traced above that studio door which he opened betimes and seldom closed until nightfall.

The Salon of 1886 witnessed his commanding re-entry with ' The Sermon,' the following year he divided first place with Segantini at Amsterdam, and 1889 saw the industrious, unobtrusive painter of Egmond share with Sargent the two medals of honour allotted the American section of the Paris International Exposition. Not only were the vast majority of Grand Prix recipients decidedly older than this artist of eight-and-twenty, most of them were already men of established reputation, such as Israëls, Tadema, Liebermann, von Uhde, and the like. While Melchers's four contributions were distinctive and individual, there was an inevitable affinity between his work as a whole and that of Liebermann and von Uhde. Liebermann, too, had gone to Holland and had painted Dutch fisherfolk mending their nets on the sandy, weed-strewn shore of Zandvoort, or the inmates of those great city hospitals and asylums dozing or chatting in sunlit courtyard. Von Uhde, also, had striven to bring home to simple minds not only the spiritual message, but the bodily presence of our Lord just as He might gather about Him the poor and stricken children of to-day. It was not that Gari Melchers in any way imitated these men. He merely formed part of a symptomatic movement which both glorified the workmen and endeavoured to restate Scriptural truths in the most unaffected of modern terms. Champions of this procedure have been many, one phase of its expression beginning with the immortal painter-etcher of Leyden and Amsterdam, and continuing, through Millet, to the naturalistic and

BRABANÇONNE

By Gari Melchers

[*The Annmary Brown Memorial, Providence, R. I., Courtesy of General Rush C. Hawkins*]

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mystical Bastien-Lepage. In this category Melchers takes high rank. It would in fact be difficult to point to any work of its class more rugged and more devout, more realistic in its outward setting or more reverent in spirit, than his ' Supper at Emmaus ' where for a moment the Master seats Himself in the midst of these humble folk and breaks bread at their rude board.

Nevertheless it is impossible to maintain that these belated pietists, these Christian socialists of art, achieved exalted results. The visions which the gentle Bastien saw in the garden of Damvillers, those touching episodes von Uhde beheld in German cottage, or the melodramatic scenes Munkácsy fabricated in his sumptuous Paris studio are alike unconvincing, alike wanting in true spiritual naïveté. The idea itself involves a contradiction, a paradox, and hence it was inevitable that when Gari Melchers confined himself to less problematic themes he should have attained a more consistent level. Untouched by personal subjectivity and unclouded by creed he painted Dutch life in its deepest, most intimate phases. They were mainly figure compositions sharply seen and exactly recorded. After ' The Sermon ' came ' The Communion '; after ' The Pilots '—as notable a performance in its way as Leibl's ' Village Politicians '—came ' The Shipbuilder.' Sometimes he went out-of-doors where he was himself fond of spending a restful hour. ' In the Dunes ' walk two flaxen-haired peasant girls, one carrying a yoke and a pair of blue milk pails, the other a huge basket. Striding briskly over the crusted snow a couple of ' Skaters ' hurry along toward the frozen canal. The whole subdued yet colourful portrait of Holland is there. Prim interiors are permeated with that hard northern glare which suffuses all things with a note of sadness and resignation. Exterior scenes respond obediently to shifting season or the precise hour of day. It is an art which is explicit and veracious. Nothing, surely, could be more vigorous, more wholesome, or more refreshing in its

calm sanity. The very soundness of its technique bespeaks a superbly balanced organization. And above all Melchers was painting air as well as light. He never failed subtly to harmonize subject and environment. Smoothly and without insistence upon a series of distracting dots he always managed to suggest that intervening aerial medium between the seer and the thing seen.

While at first the painter seemed satisfied with accuracy of vision and fidelity of rendering, a certain gentler touch gradually crept into his work. Those rigid forms seated in bare Lutheran churches unbent before the fireside or amid the intimacy of the domestic circle. Inflexible truth became mellowed and modified by a tenderness that flowed straight from the human heart. Wholly endearing in their frank community of feeling are ' The Family,' now hanging in the National Gallery of Berlin, and the ' Maternity ' of the Luxembourg, the latter showing a blonde mother in flowered cap and cape holding in her arms a serious, blue-eyed infant. It is in pictures such as these as well as in the later and still more simple and direct ' Mother and Child ' which has found its home in America that Melchers strikes his truest, most profound note. It is here that he reveals better than in certain more ambitious canvases the potential divinity in all humankind. Constant effort and discipline both moral and technical were necessary in order that such results might be attained. Through a gradual, unhurried sequence of development he broadened and deepened that which had come to him by right of birth. The patient years passed at Egmond served to bring forth just those qualities which were most significant and most enduring alike in the painter and in his chosen themes.

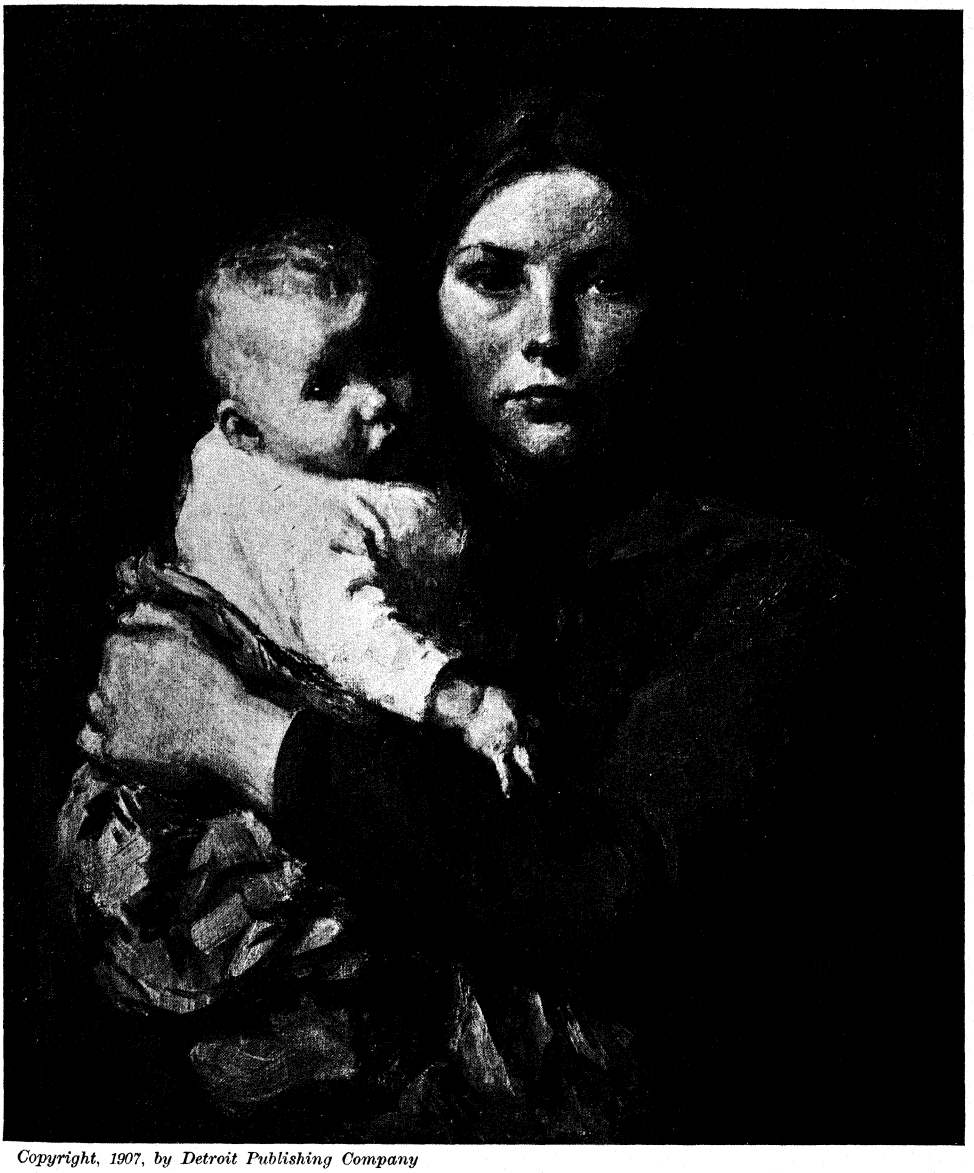
From the hour he first settled in Holland until he had successively won the highest honours in Munich, Paris, and elsewhere, he had led an ungregarious, almost obscure existence.

Later, one of his whims was to have a number of studios at the same time in different places, and to drift to each in turn as he desired a change of view or fresh impetus. No one, in those bachelor days, ever knew where to find him. He might be at Egmond, in Paris, in Picardy, or at Bois-le-Roi on the edge of the forest of Fontainebleau. His mail followed him aimlessly about or accumulated unregarded in one particular spot. His friends were amused or annoyed according to their varied dispositions, and dealers on the hunt for pictures were driven to distraction. It is peculiarly characteristic of Melchers that, after having sent his four big canvases to the Paris Exposition of 1889, he should have gone off to the country on a sketching trip, leaving unopened on his return, for several additional days, the official announcement of his award. Possessing such a temperament it has been impossible for him to grow stale or fall into a rut. Personally without a trace of the routine or the artificial, his vision has continued vivacious and animated, and artistic enthusiasm has never flagged. Moreover, he has never been the victim of a system or a theory. While a persistent, exacting workman he has no special mode of procedure. Each subject presents new difficulties and new possibilities. He might well say with Manet, " Every time I begin a picture it is like throwing myself into the water and learning how to swim." A portrait may be finished in a week, and an elaborate composition within a month, or again it may take him years to achieve the desired result. Industry and inspiration are his twin, though not always simultaneous, helpmates.

The Paris studio was situated for a number of years in the rue Viète, just off the avenue de Villiers, it having previously belonged to de Nittis, the delicate, spirited painter of street scenes. At the near-by café Drév used to dine regularly most of the artists and writers of the neighbourhood including Puvis de Chavannes, Dannat, Edelfeldt, Munkácsy, and Dumas fils.

Between Puvis de Chavannes and Melchers the most cordial relations were always maintained, the younger man often visiting the serene, pacific synthesist of art and humanity at his studio in the place Pigalle. It was Puvis's custom to receive a few chosen intimates from eight until nine in the morning, usually arrayed in a long dressing-gown and slippers, going later to his quarters at Neuilly where he worked in absolute seclusion upon his limpid, arcadian compositions. On one of these morning calls it was Melchers's privilege to watch another earnest visionary, Eugène Carrière, paint a portrait-head of Puvis as he stood by the window in apostolic robe and pantoufles. It was a lesson the young artist never forgot, nor can he ever fail to recall with genuine emotion the day he was named a Chevalier of the Legion of Honour when Puvis affectionately gave him his own cross, with its bit of faded ribbon, which he had himself received years before from the hand of Napoleon III. They shared, indeed, many points in common, among others a dignity, a tolerance toward varied and diverse forms of artistic expression, and above all a devotion to their calling which nothing could impede or belittle. And it was hence with pleasure, rather than the reverse, that one later noted in Melchers's mural decorations for the Congressional Library in Washington a legitimate and sympathetic recognition of that same ample simplicity of conception and treatment which had made the art of Puvis de Chavannes one of the imperishable glories of nineteenth-century painting.

It was but natural, after so long a residence abroad and such continued Continental success, that Gari Melchers should have at length turned toward his native country, where he was less known and where he had so seldom exhibited. Within a short time he has managed closely to identify himself with local conditions. The medium has been portraiture; nor is portraiture anything of a departure, for throughout his career he has not only painted numerous specific likenesses, but has always been



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MOTHER AND CHILD

By Gari Melchers

[*Courtesy of James Deering, Esq.*]

Kopie

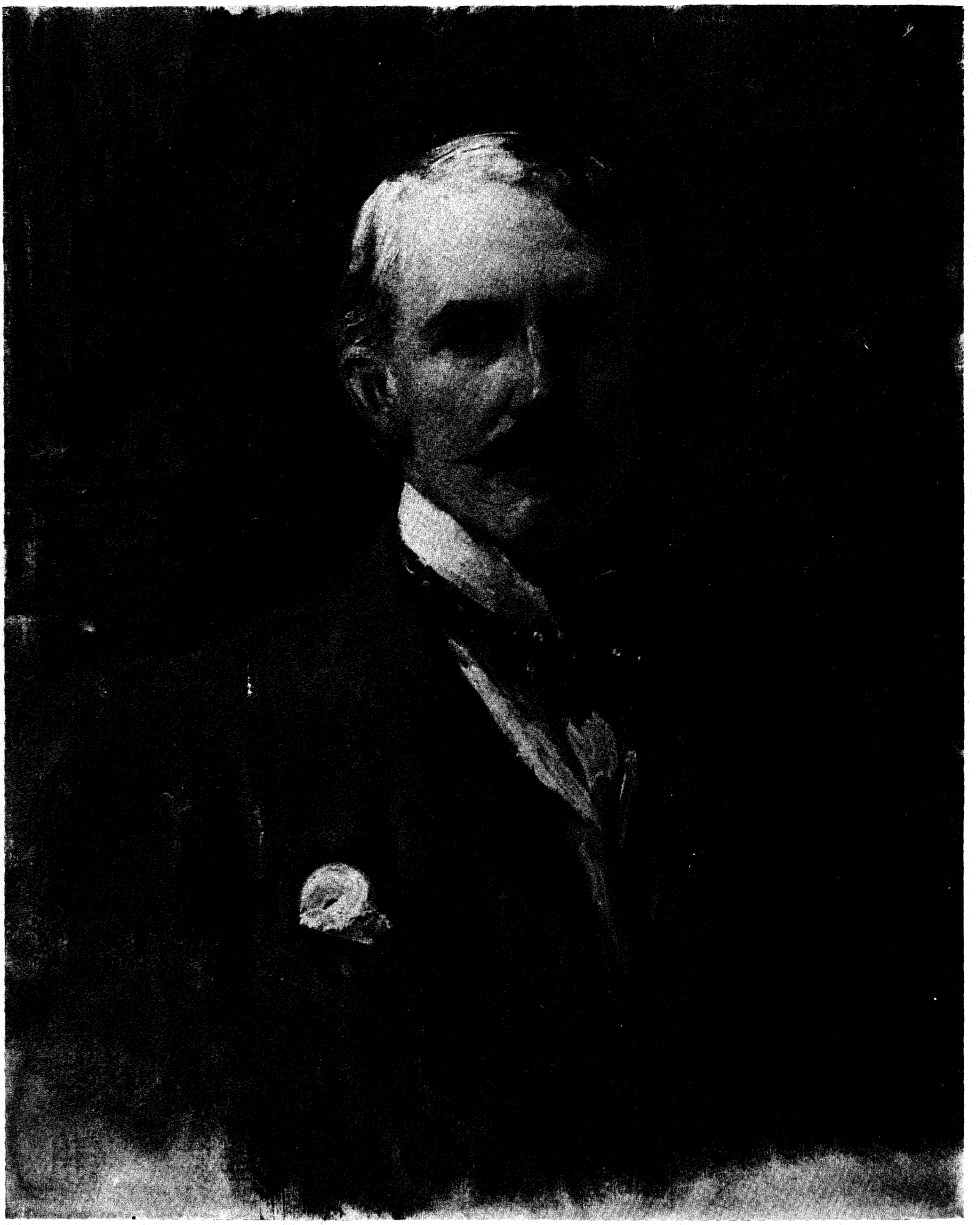
a discerning student of human physiognomy. You need only gaze at the sober, characterful mien of 'The Man with the Cloak' who looks from the walls of the National Gallery of Rome, or note the appropriately decorative 'Brabançonne' in order to realize how far he had already carried this particular branch of art. And still when he finally returned to America he discovered just that quality which had thus far been lacking, and which seemed, indeed, there to be awaiting him. During the early and middle phases of his development he had practised an almost anti-emotional verity of statement. He had looked upon life with a certain rigidity, the rigidity of the realist who adds nothing, who takes nothing away. It remained for him to acquire a welcome flexibility of interpretation, and this he attained without sacrificing an iota of his previous conquest. It was in the nature of the man to give no hostages, to make no concessions, nor has he ever swerved from this rule. There is no need for inferring that his former work with its fresh, vivid colour-spots, its grave countenances, and enticing glimpses of landscape—a wood, a garden, or the red roof of some adjacent cottage—was in any degree wanting in a distinct, inherent appeal of its own, yet the more recent canvases display an added measure of grace. The man who depicted with such resolute accent the facts of humbler existence grasps no less accurately the spirit of those more complex beings whose portraits he is now engaged in painting. While not without their touch of urbanity they are not facile or frivolous likenesses. They reveal, each of them, a rounded, certain mastery and a tonality as crisp and ringing as it is unconventional. No vague, unsanitary landscapes envelop these individuals, nor are they suffocated with costly hangings or imperilled by unsteady bits of pottery. All is consistent, legitimate, and stimulating. You never see in this work a touch of drama or a hint of trickery. There is no convulsive straining after effect. The right result

comes through an instinctive, well-nigh infallible, power of selection. The requisite elements for each picture seem always to have dwelt here within the limits of the frame.

Although modern in the best interpretation of the word, Gari Melchers is no restless, precipitate innovator. One of his most typical characteristics is a respect for his predecessors. As he himself says, "Nothing counts in this world with the painter but a good picture; and no matter how good a one you may paint, you have only to go to the galleries and see how many better ones there are." One of his few theories is that the fine things in art are nearly always so for the same or similar reasons; and he also believes that the really big men of all times are strikingly alike. Wholly undisturbed by sudden and apparently radical changes of manner in others, he paints with a breadth and assurance that never fail to convey the desired impression. Behind the slightest of his sketches or the most ambitious full-length is visible a sound, disciplined certainty of purpose which can hardly go astray. Though in glancing at his work you may vaguely be reminded of this painter or that, you will scarcely think of anyone not in the highest degree a master-craftsman. Melchers is not a subjective or an imaginative artist. He belongs to the sturdy, positive race of observers. The spirit of his art, as well as its expression, is frankly objective. He continues that tradition which is represented with such impregnable strength and security by some of the foremost painters the world has ever known—by Hals in Holland and Holbein in Germany. No change of taste or temper can ever dislodge men whose work is characterized by a similar directness, simplicity, and ample, generous humanity. They offer a splendid counterpoise to tendencies which are nervous and effete. Their very solidity defies all transition, all fluctuation. Now that he has returned for a portion of each season, it is doubly apparent that Gari Melchers's sojourn abroad has splendidly served its purpose.

The years in Egmond and Paris, or the visits to London, where his friends numbered Watts and Val Prinsep, as well as Shannon, have borne rich fruit. He left a mere lad. He has come back a mature artist bringing to a new country the lessons taught so well in the old. It was not otherwise that the great pioneers of the past were wont to do when Dürer wandered homeward from Italy or van Dyck crossed the Channel to England.

J. J. SHANNON



J. J. SHANNON

Portrait of the artist painted by himself

[*Courtesy of Mr. Shannon*]

J. J. SHANNON

IT is in portraiture, in the definite transcription of feature and of form, that the artist is presumably more faithful to fact than to the allurements of fancy. Yet a certain proportion of the great portrait painters have from the outset been fantasists. The brooding mystery of the 'Mona Lisa,' the luminous gloom that shrouds the heads of Rembrandt's burghers, the matchless tonal unity of Velázquez's 'Philip,' and the silver sheen that plays about the brow of van Dyck's 'Charles' are all the sheer magic of creative genius. From the days when the Greeks tinted their marbles and studded them with jewels to the hour Sargent painted 'Mrs. Hamersley' reclining among brocade cushions, artists have striven to lift personality beyond the realm of mere reality. The part man has been called upon to play in portraiture is a distinctly obvious one. In pietistic days he obediently knelt before a shrine, in martial times he pranced upon a charger, and in the hour of peace he mused by the window or fireside or sat in sunlit doorway. As occasion demanded he wore robes of state or the white ruff of a simple townsman. His rôle has always remained more or less literal and documentary. With woman, matters have been different, and it is because of her evasiveness, her psychic and emotional flexibility, that she embodies and reflects the subtler essence of portraiture. Whatever man has wished her to be she has become; whatever mantle he has cast about her shoulders she has worn. In the age of allegory she was appro-

priately allegorical, in the days of romance she was radiantly romantic, while to-day she is as restless and fastidious as man's own exacting vision. It is impossible not to feel that the listless evocations of Botticelli, or the dainty divinities of Boucher and Fragonard, are portraits only by inference. They are not Simonetta, Pompadour, or du Barry. They are symbols of a persistent, though ever changing sense of beauty. By a curious and piquant contradiction this fluid, unquiet being typifies one of the enduring elements alike in art and in life—the element of ideality. With all her complexity, it can hardly be held that the modern woman is as complex and as diverse as the painter of the present depicts her. It is rather that he sees her, with aesthetic and temperamental eye, in this guise or that and paints her not as she is, but as he would have her. The modish dexterity of Sargent, the impalpable synthesis of Whistler, and the vapoury volutions of Alexander are the specific properties each artist in turn brings to the delineation of appearance and personality, and it is these qualities which, after all, constitute the final impression. There is of course a broad similarity of treatment in all current portraiture. Yet whether she gently emerges from the fogs of London, the opal haze of Paris, or stands in New York's relucent sunlight, the woman of to-day, as of former years, bears the impress of her time and her interpreter. About her cling not so much the outward accidents of life as the finer tissues of feeling and aspiration. She impersonates an ideal, or—to the irreverent and insensitive—a convention.

British art during its richest period—that of the later eighteenth century—was pre-eminently dedicated to portraiture. The first president of the Royal Academy, the worthy Sir Joshua, was almost exclusively a painter of portraits, and though Gainsborough's landscapes are justly approved, his fame, as well as that of Romney, Hoppner, and their successors, rests upon a spirited and characteristic record of the gracious

women and gallant men of their day and generation. It was chiefly, indeed, the arch allure of English womanhood and the wild-rose bloom of the English girl that these men most loved to limn upon canvas. No school of painting, and no period of artistic activity, has left behind a more engaging transcription of feminine loveliness. Though this eloquent tradition originated with Rubens, and was carried overseas to the lasting benefit of British art by van Dyck, it quickly became naturalized in its new surroundings. Moreover, there was nothing either artificial or illogical in the proceeding, for there was, and still is, a marked racial affinity between Englishmen of the east and south and the Teutons of northern Europe. While the painter of the Stuarts brought with him a certain requisite poise and worldly stateliness, it was from the winding lanes and green hedgerows of rural England that was wafted the true morning-glory of British art. From Plympton, in Devon, where Reynolds was born, from Gainsborough's smiling Suffolk, and the Lancashire, long neglected but never forgotten, of Romney, there came to painting a new beauty, a fresh fragrance. No matter whether they passed most of their time immortalizing great folk, living in imposing mansions in Leicester, or Cavendish Square, and mixing with the world of fashion, neither these men nor their colleagues, Lawrence and Opie, quite lost that touch of wholesome Saxon charm which radiates alike from 'The Parson's Daughter,' 'Nelly O'Brien,' or 'Perdita Robinson' seated before her screen of springtime foliage. While this particular ideal of beauty, or, if you will, this convention, never wholly disappeared, it altered sadly during succeeding decades. Now it expanded with the outdoor sentimentalists into a smooth, milkmaid buxomness, again, with the Pre-Raphaelites, it became vegetative and deciduous. It was close upon a century before the true spirit of this art, with its unstudied distinction and its frank worship of fair, sweet faces, again came into vogue.

And, odd as it may seem, it was not a native Englishman, but a young painter from across the water, who has in large measure revived the graphic felicity of former times.

Apart from theories diverting or informing painting is primarily a matter of vision. The vision of Watts was a spiritual vision, the vision of Rossetti was sensuous, and that of Sargent is external and physical. It is not the moral, the langorous and narcotic, or the assertively mundane portrait which J. J. Shannon paints, but the portrait which may be designated as pictorial. Though influenced on one side by the native elegance of English eighteenth-century art, and on the other by the sweeping, comprehensive grasp of Velázquez, the formula which Shannon employs with such success is none the less his own, and is one which appeals to him with imperious conviction. Whatever he has accomplished is personal, for few painters have studied less, and relied more upon inherent impulse. Other men may view things vaguely or positively, veiled in mystery or sharpened by actuality. Shannon belongs to those who will first and last see an object, and render it, with reference to its value as a picture, as something possessing, within prescribed limitations, an almost independent existence. With ready, spontaneous tact, and with genuine taste, he brings together and harmonizes various appropriate accessories until he has secured an effect which is less formal than fanciful, less literal, in short, than free and instinctive. The idea is not exclusive. It is practised in a measure by every painter, though few employ it so consistently, and few attain a similar charm and unity of impress.

It need not be assumed that Shannon spends feverish days devising elaborate combinations. He is not one of those industrious individuals who set the stage before beginning a portrait. Gifts both visual and temperamental enable him to perceive at a glance the decorative possibilities of a single figure or a group,

LADY MARJORIE MANNERS

By J. J. Shannon

[*Courtesy of the artist*]

and fluent technical mastery makes it easy for him to translate a scene in all its animation and vitality. It is in like fashion that he has painted maid of honour and marchioness, flower girl from the sun-bright street or blustering master of hounds. Framed by the roses and hollyhocks of his own garden stands 'Lady Henry Cavendish-Bentinck.' On the terrace of Haddon lingers the slender, high-bred form of little 'Lord Ross.' The priceless quality of the art to which Shannon and his colleagues are the heirs is its ability to suggest the special atmosphere and environment of a given period. This power of placing the sitter in proper relation to his surroundings should be not the least aim of portraiture. It is a faculty which Shannon exercises with singular fitness. To him beauty and beauty's setting are inseparable, indissoluble.

The man who, for a score and more of years has been painting such a graceful, aristocratic succession of British men and women is not, as many have inferred, either an Englishman or an Irishman by actual right of nativity. J. J. Shannon was born on 3 February 1862, in Auburn, New York. Still, as but one generation separates him from the British Isles, and since his boyhood was spent across the border at St. Catherines, in Canada, he cannot, with ethnic precision, be claimed as an American. Despite a precocious liking for art he does not come from a race of painters, the nearest approach to the fraternity the family had previously produced being his grandfather, who was an architect. As in the case of almost everyone who attains position, his youth and early struggles have been enriched by legends picturesque and apocryphal. Needless to say he is thankful that none of these happenings ever took place outside the agile brains of biographers and critics in search of local colour. Never, he smilingly avers, did he wander about rural Canada painting posters for agricultural shows or selling hand-tinted copies of Landseer's canine and bovine masterpieces. He

neither studied in Munich nor starved in Paris. It is true that he began in a modest way, but the way was wholesome and typical. In a shop window he often passed hung a still-life composition which impressed the future exhibitor at the Royal Academy as being more ambitious than exact. It showed a rabbit and a partridge dangling on a nail, and though the work of an eminent resident painter, it failed to satisfy the boy's maturing ideals. Craving a more accurate and worthy representation of the same theme the young realist forthwith sallied out and shot his own rabbit and bird and suspended them in an unoccupied room at the rear of the house. There, with nothing better at his disposal than plain unprepared cardboard and common mixed paint, the work was begun. The boy had to play truant while thus engaged, so after painting all morning or afternoon, he would put on his cap and mitts and dash into the house breathless and aglow, pretending he had been to school. At the end of several days the game got so " high " that the family was moved to investigate the situation with the result that the picture, which had almost reached completion, was finished with full parental approval. Matters did not, however, end there, for the boy's effort was subsequently exhibited in the same shop window side by side with the elder artist's canvas, the concensus of local critical opinion distinctly favouring the new school of still-life painting.

The success of his first attempt being so manifest, the latent Associate was at once placed in the care of Wright, St. Catherines's leading all-around painter. At the end of a few months the amiable and conscientious Wright, who could paint anything from a bowl of fruit to a coach and four, confessed that his pupil had exhausted the artistic resources of St. Catherines. Wright urged that the boy be sent to London or Paris in order to complete his training, and for family and other reasons London was the choice. Thus, toward the end of his sixteenth year, J. J.

Shannon found himself a student at the South Kensington Schools, along with Menpes and Clausen. It was his original intention to have remained for a limited time only, but so exceptional was the progress made by the former painter of ' A Rabbit and a Partridge ' that Mr. (now Sir Edward J.) Poynter wrote with enthusiasm to the lad's parents commending his ability and urging that he be allowed to continue at the Schools. Although he stayed sometime longer, Shannon declined to be enslaved by preceptor or sterilized by routine. He preferred to move faster than is customary at South Kensington. He took the silver medal for his first year's work in the life-room, and at the close of his second was awarded the gold medal in the national competition. Portraiture was naturally his chief preoccupation, and while still a student he was commissioned to paint for the queen the likeness of Miss Horatia Stopford, one of the maids of honour, the canvas being exhibited at the Academy of 1881 by royal command.

Yet the youth who at eighteen painted his first court beauty, had still to convince the London public that he possessed both a manner and a message. Though he forthwith rented a studio and began work with infectious optimism, it cannot be said that measurable results were attained until some five years later when he sent to the Grosvenor Gallery a simple and direct full-length of Mrs. Shannon, which was catalogued as ' A Lady in Black.' The insidious influence of Whistler was apparent, yet the picture more than established the newcomer's claim to consideration. With the exhibition at the same gallery the following season of his standing likeness of ' The Late Henry Vigne, Esquire,' Shannon's position was assured. Forceful in characterization, affirmative in draughtsmanship, and displaying a fulfilling sense of colour and of design, the canvas was not only received with enthusiasm in England but subsequently won first honours in Paris, Berlin, and Vienna. There was no further question as

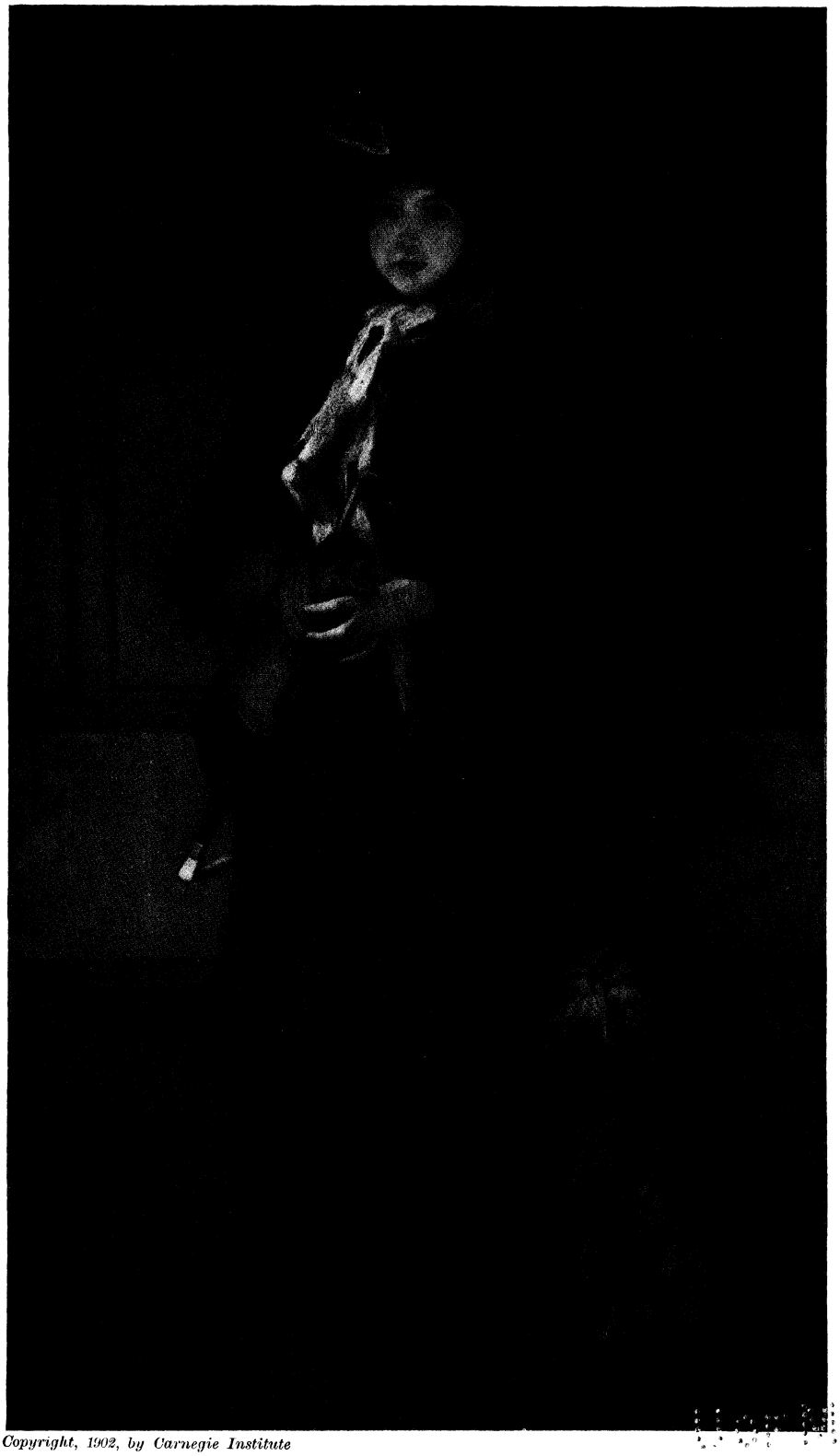
to the painter's future. Beginning with an order from the Marchioness of Granby, who was among the first women of title to discover his talent, commissions rapidly poured in upon the artist who soon secured, and has since retained, his position as the most brilliant among the younger Anglo-Saxon portraitists. Within a few brief years—it was in 1897—he was elected an Associate of the Royal Academy, of which his former professor, Sir Edward J. Poynter, had just previously been chosen president. It proved an uncommonly auspicious occasion for good men, Sargent having been made an R. A., and Alfred Parsons, like Shannon, an A. R. A.

It would be superfluous to follow from canvas to canvas the progress of Shannon's art. Prodigally productive, a mere enumeration of his portraits would fill defenseless souls with dismay. It is sufficient to note that he has been represented season after season at Burlington House, the New Gallery, the Grafton Gallery, and the Fine Arts Society in London, as well as various British, Continental, and American exhibitions. In common with Melchers and Lavery he is especially partial to the Venice International, being a frequent exhibitor at those admirable biennial displays in the distant Water City. To the customary seeker after charm of statement or vigour of analysis, this vast sequence of canvases drops naturally into three classes —portraits wherein beauty predominates, portraits wherein characterization is the chief motive, and compositions revealing a less restricted play of invention. It is little short of astonishing that the lad whose early attempts were as cautious as the work of his first master, the estimable Wright of St. Catherines, should, within a few years, have perfected a manner so supple and flowing in its expression and imbued with such suavity and distinction. From that first sweeping portrait of ' Lady Granby ' to the last canvas standing unfinished in his oak-panelled London studio he has moved steadily toward a fuller realization

MISS KITTY

By J. J. Shannon

[*The Carnegie Institute, Pittsburgh*]



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of his pictorial aim. Though haste has here and there told adversely upon his production, and though he has been continually forced to choose between popularity and good painting, the vision has daily grown ampler and the tone of his art more individual. And almost automatic facility of choice and fertility of colouration and composition mark most of the later work. Whatever there is attractive in the sitter seems spontaneously to spring to the eye of the painter and to flow from the swift, obedient stroke of his brush. It appears at times perilously easy for him to paint, and in the ease lurks, of course, the peril.

Although he developed so rapidly he did not advance without constant effort and application. In the imposing full-length portraits of ' Mrs. Prideaux-Brune ' and the ' Countess of Dufferin and Ava,' he had but partially mastered that fusion of sentiment and technique which was later to illumine the sylvan grace of ' Lady Dickson Poynder and her Daughter.' In the seated likeness of the ' Duchess of Portland ' he had not wholly caught the flexible total gradations of ' Spot Red ' and ' On the Stairs.' Among the single figures there is scant choice between the wistful, unconscious anticipation of ' Miss Kitty,' in green riding-habit and ermine tippet, standing against the dark wall, and the pensive reverie of ' Lady Marjorie Manners ' instinct with old-world sentiment and modern suggestion. Among the larger canvases none, perhaps, even to this day, surpasses the well-nigh faultless distribution and the subdued glimmer of grey, gold, and blue which distinguish ' Lady Carbery and her Children.' He had early, it appears, learned that propriety of grouping and arrangement which was the gift of the older men and which has dignified so few among the younger. Just as the ' Phil May,' which shows the inimitable draughtsman in hunting coat, with the habitual cigar between his fingers, stands alone among the character studies so does ' The Flower Girl ' occupy

a place by herself among the more decorative compositions. Undertaken in purely occasional moods, and as a respite from the strain of routine effort, some of Shannon's best work is seen in such canvases as the Romney-like 'Iris,' the oval 'War,' which Millais himself might have been proud to sign, and, above all, in 'The Flower Girl.' It was certainly not a commission; it was something more consistent with inspiration which impelled him to perpetuate the melting pink, green, gold, and black of this last scene. As with the others, the picture sprang instinctively into being. Reality furnished the elements, but it was the painter who selected and perfected nature's offering. The story of 'The Flower Girl' is, with slight variations, the story of all the subjects of this particular class. She used to go about the streets of Eastbourne, the actual flower girl, wearing a loose, dotted cotton gown, and carrying on one arm a basket of roses and on the other a baby. It was only a step from the sidewalk to the garden, so she came in and sat beneath the spreading plane trees just as she was—baby, basket, and big, feathered hat. Broadly, sincerely, and with full, liquid brush-strokes, she was painted during those golden August afternoons, not in a studio, but outside, with the sunlight filtering through the leaves on sitter and on canvas. It is small wonder that when the picture went up to London it proved the success of the Academy, and was purchased by the trustees of the Chantery Fund for the Tate Gallery just as Sargent's 'Carnation, Lily, Lily, Rose' had found similar favour fourteen years before.

The gifted painter who seems, more than any of his contemporaries, to wear with native ease much that remains of the mantle of British art during its age of glory, resides in Holland Park Road, London, in a beautiful house adjoining the famous home of Lord Leighton. Around the house, which is built in the Dutch Renaissance style, runs a high brick wall broken by ornamental wrought-iron gates. At the back stretches a rambling

garden brightened by clusters of roses and hollyhocks. Throughout the interior are quantities of rare furniture and tapestries, and here and there hangs a canvas or two. The studio is a long, spacious room somewhat resembling the banquet hall of a Tudor mansion, and it is there that Shannon paints dowager, duchess, or his own delightful wife and daughter. Despite the daily procession of distinguished sitters it is the members of his own household whom he most enjoys putting upon canvas either as portraits or in some less explicit vein. In certain of these family groups including 'Tales from the Jungle,' 'The Fireside,' and similar subject-pictures his talent finds its most complex, and perhaps its most appropriate, setting. A little more concentration, a little less dexterous, though in itself charming, dissemination of interest, and he can here achieve what may prove to be a permanent artistic expression.

Shannon is a strict intuitionalist in his methods. He is a rapid, dashing workman using a generous, rich-set palette and large, square brushes. He scrutinizes his sitter carefully, yet when he once decides upon the desired effect seldom hesitates and rarely or never makes a preliminary sketch. Although he did not learn to paint under the eye of the facile Carolus he is not a whit less clever than the cleverest of the Paris-taught men. A confident, sustained improvisator, he is sometimes exacting to the point of caprice. As a rule expeditious, it required upwards of sixty sittings for him to complete the simple half-length of 'Mrs. Magniac.' While his art reflects qualities which are the reverse of aggressive, it rarely, at its best, lacks the requisite elements of vigour and certainty of purpose. In general these canvases are a reproach to those who exalt the supremacy of technique. There is here neither overstatement nor understatement. One is neither wearied by oppressive fidelity nor tantalized by vagueness. A singular, and in these days rare, charm of surface distinguishes most of Shannon's canvases. In

essence this art is a sensitive, emotional art, modern, though looking backward to the days when beauty was still deemed a necessity. Unlike so much current work it is neither Gallic nor Japanese, but straightforward and Anglo-Saxon—more a matter of aspiration than of observation. It is manifestly lacking in analysis. Its very defects are racial, for in its desire to please and to prettify it is not above making concessions. This was the besetting sin of Lawrence. Unless he is vigilant, it may prove the undoing of Shannon. The battle between the serious and the saccharine has been a long and wasting fight. It is England's more than Hundred Years' artistic war.

Although he enjoys a vogue second only to the painter of 'Asher Wertheimer,' and 'Mrs. Carl Meyer and her Children,' Shannon continues wholesome and unaffected. His views on art are temperate and traditional. He believes in little beside the conquest of beauty. Of aversions he boasts but one, an utter detestation for the photographic portrait, the portrait which is a mere copy and not, in so far as possible, a creation. While he occasionally paints with chromatic opulence, as in 'Springtime' and 'The Flower Girl' he prefers as a rule the subdued appeal of softly modulated tones. Faded pinks, pearl-greys, and silver-blacks are among his favourite hues. Like his friend and colleague Melchers, he professes a keen admiration for the work of his contemporaries. He believes that each man who strives honestly produces something different from his fellows, and hence diplomatically maintains that there can be no such thing as rivalry. For several months during the past few seasons Shannon has been living and painting in New York, Boston, and other American cities. Although he had previously exhibited but seldom away from home, and while he was properly known only to those who attended the annual displays in London, his success in the States has been a repetition of his British triumphs. Just as in England wealth, beauty, and fashion have

THE FLOWER GIRL

By J. J. Shannon

[*The National Gallery of British Art, London*]

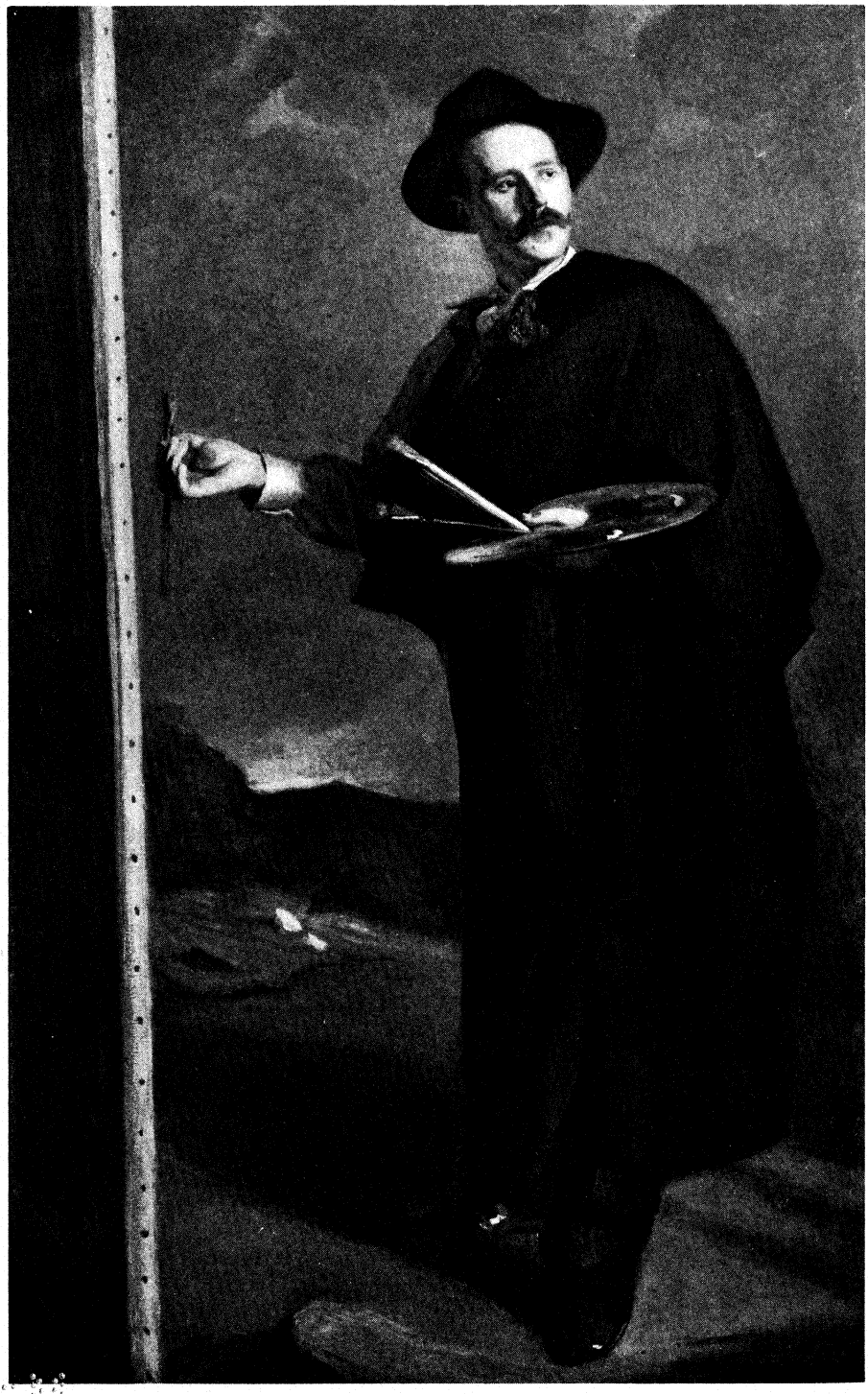
flocked to his studio and have been in turn painted graciously and dexterously by the modest, genial man whose sole preoccupation is his art. The types he encounters abroad are of course akin to those with which he has so long been familiar. Yet while American prelates, financiers, and flowers of the leisured world bear a general family resemblance to their English equivalents, they betray tendencies which are sometimes widely different. There is little doubt, however, that Shannon is sensible to this divergence, for he is by nature responsively intuitive. There is scant reason to fear that, wherever he might go, his work would suffer material change, for the expressiveness of his style and the delicate bloom of his colouring are permanent, not accidental characteristics. The enduring elements of his art can but remain the same whether he depicts the lithe elegance of the English woman or the nervous, magnetic splendour of her cousin overseas.

Though the art of J. J. Shannon is, in common with so much modern work, eclectic in its surface proclivities, there is little question that its main appeal descends direct from those eighteenth-century masters who painted the belles, beaux, and sober statesmen of Georgian days. It is to that superb row of "Windsor Beauties" in Hampton Court, to Holland House, the Wallace Collection, the National Portrait Gallery, and various great private houses that this specific ideal of beauty can be traced. There will of course always be an uncertainty as to just how much the later men owed to the aristocratic, nonchalant painter of the court of Charles. Yet it is evident that this love of fair countenances and artless piquancy is not a foreign, but rather an innate possession. The best things alike in English art and English verse appear to spring from the same clear source. The tender magic of Miranda, the romantic languor of divine Sacharissa, the seductive revelations of Julia, and the comely wiles of Highland Mary each reflect something

of that radiance which lies at the heart of natural things, that unspoiled happiness which is the chief light of beauty. While it is not apparent that British painters or poets hold in any degree a monopoly of these qualities, they have surely crystallized them into visions typical of purely English loveliness. That it should be the mission of the artist to increase and to extend this birthright there is small doubt. And yet no one knows better than he how difficult it is to add to this dream of fair women—a dream born not alone of fact but of the mingled fancy and illusive yearning of generations.

IGNACIO ZULOAGA

Mobil



IGNACIO ZULOAGA

Portrait of the artist by Jacques-Émile Blanche

[*Courtesy of Señor Zuloaga*]

IGNACIO ZULOAGA

THOUGH her galleys no longer sweep the main or her soldiers pitch their tents in Italy, in Flanders, or stubbornly hold in check the armies of the First Consul, Spain is not, as many fancy, a nation with a past but no future. Contrary to general opinion, the Spain of to-day is a vigorous, progressive country, a country which is rapidly advancing politically, commercially, and artistically. Resplendent dreams of world-conquest have been renounced, the temporal power of the church is being restricted, and internal dissension has been almost wholly eradicated. Everywhere throughout the Peninsula are signs of regeneration, and everywhere is the fundamental vitality of the race asserting itself. The State is at last shaking off the lethargy of centuries, is learning to look within, not without, and is cultivating a sound, inspiring patriotism. The Spaniard himself is changing. He has in large measure ceased to be the fatalistic Turk of the West, and Carlist and gypsy are alike making way for the energetic man of affairs. The social and economic depression which followed the return of the troops from the Antilles and the Philippines is righting itself under the youthful Alphonso, and Spain is now looking toward the future with mingled hope and confidence. "Resucita," the closing note of Galdós's stirring play, 'Electra,' is the watchword of modern Spain, and Riego's hymn the Marseillaise of her ardent partisans. This coming to fresh life, this resurrection, renaissance, or whatever it may be termed, dates, of

course, from the Revolution of 'sixty-eight, "La Gloriosa," as it is fondly called, which was logically followed by the adoption of the Constitution in 'seventy-six. Since these two recent and memorable events, to which may be added a third—that of the Spanish-American war—Spain has substantially become another nation. Though the last European power to feel the throb of latter-day progress, she is responding with alacrity to that resistless summons. She seems bent upon compensating for the dignified somnolence of the past by taking firm hold upon the issues of the present.

Both in letters and in art the same tendency is manifest, and, indeed, here achieves its highest expression. The sensitive, responsive product of material conditions, it is to the writer and the painter that one must turn in order to discover the image of that New Spain so long sought across hostile frontier and distant sea only to be found at last among the bare sierras, the purple vineyards, and the stern, proud hearts of the home-country. No drama since Victor Hugo's 'Hernani' has aroused a people to such demonstrations of disfavour and approval as Galdós's 'Electra,' which stands as the symbol of advancement and echoes the current revolt against clericalism. In Doña Emilia Pardo Bazán not only the Spanish woman, but the woman of the entire Continent, possesses her most liberal and rational champion. Yet, despite the leading literary figures, despite the plays of Galdós and Echegaray, or the novels of Valera and Valdés, it is the younger Spanish artists who best reflect the spirit of the hour and the vivid picturesqueness of contemporary life and scene. It is they who best continue, under actual circumstances, the noblest of all Spanish aesthetic traditions, the tradition of Il Greco, Zurbarán, Velázquez, and Goya. Nothing less racial or less replete with reality than the canvases of Sorolla, Rusiñol, Zuloaga, Anglada, and Bilbao could possibly have brought Spanish painting back to the course

whence it had aimlessly meandered after the death of Goya. The debased classicism of José de Madrazo, the brilliant, facile bric-à-brac of Fortuny, and the theatric naturalism of Pradilla and Alisal had successively vitiated Peninsular taste almost beyond redemption. A great national quickening along all lines of activity was necessary before art could regain her rightful position, and it was this movement which alone gave birth to the men of to-day. They are children of " La Gloriosa," each of them. Their pictures glow with warmth and intensity. Within the past decade they have utterly broken with influences French and Italian. Names which a few years back loomed large—Rico, Zamacoïs, Villegas, Benlliure—have been rapidly fading before the dazzling outdoor effulgence of Sorolla and the masterly impersonations of Zuloaga. Inspiration has been found at home, not abroad. The student no longer deems it essential to go to Paris or to Rome. Barcelona, Valencia, and Seville offer more consistent and profitable opportunities for self-development. A wholesome nationalism has at last replaced an internationalism whose fruits are ever scarce and ever bitter-sweet.

On 26 July 1870, the year Fortuny's ' Spanish Marriage ' was first exhibited in Paris, there was born in a rambling, sixteenth-century house at Eibar, in the Basque province of Vizcaya, the foremost of this redoubtable band of Spanish nationalists. The short, diverse career of Ignacio Zuloaga throngs with unusual incident. The Zuloagas are an energetic, creative family, the direct descendants of that ancient Iberian stock which early settled on the southern slopes of the Pyrenees and has never migrated and never been dislodged. Plácido Zuloaga, the father of Ignacio, is widely known as the rediscoverer of the art of damascene; his uncle, Daniel Zuloaga, is head of the pottery revival at Segovia, and his ancestors have for generations been celebrated armourers, his great-grandfather having been director of the Armería of Madrid. The atmosphere into which

Ignacio Zuloaga was born was an atmosphere of vigorous, conscious, and skillfully directed effort, tempered always by the zealous conservatism of the past. As he grew to boyhood his town was rapidly winning its title as the miniature Toledo of the North, and on all sides could be heard the hum of fly-wheel and the sound of the forge. Plácido Zuloaga, a typical Cellini, magnetic, polished, and self-willed, wished his son to study mathematics and engineering, but the lad rebelled, and as a consequence, and probably also for disciplinary reasons, the future painter was placed in the foundry to learn the secrets of ornamental metal-work. With the persistence and tenacity of his race he laboured manfully along until able to support himself. His life was practically that of a common apprentice. There was little time for pelota or other favourite games, and though he attended an occasional bull-fight, and enjoyed watching the lithe dignity of the workmen and villagers as they passed along the street or paused by the wayside for a friendly chat, he did not think, in any definite way, of placing on record that varied existence which teemed about him in such supple and colourful beauty.

It is possible that Ignacio Zuloaga might have remained at Eibar, and eventually have succeeded his father, had it not been for a certain visit to Madrid where he saw for the first time the incomparable masterpieces of the Prado. He forthwith felt impelled to become an artist. The arid intricacies of mathematics and the roar of the furnace were forever obliterated. He immediately bought himself the requisite materials, and day after day haunted the galleries, finally, without previous instruction, producing an uncommonly able copy of one of Il Greco's aristocratic, black-robed nobles. Instinctively he had gone straight to the treasure-house of Spanish painting, stepping at once into that haughty, reticent heritage which had so long been ignored. From the very beginning he identified himself with that which

DANIEL ZULOAGA AND HIS DAUGHTERS

By Ignacio Zuloaga

[*The Luxembourg, Paris*]

was most enduring and most significant in the art of his country, nor did any subsequent change of scene cause him to forsake his destined field. Yet notwithstanding this unmistakable proof of ability, enforced, as it was, by the lad's constantly renewed pleading, neither Plácido Zuloaga nor his wife had any desire to see their son launched upon a career for which they had scant sympathy and which had previously been ornamented by an uncle of somewhat Bohemian propensities. His efforts were ridiculed, and his ambitions frowned upon. Still he would not renounce the beckoning promises of ultimate attainment, so was at last reluctantly permitted to depart for Rome. He was but eighteen at the time and from thenceforth chose to live upon his own resources, aided now and then by the little help a loving mother could surreptitiously send him. His nature was forceful and self-reliant. Though he paid homage to certain dominant figures of the past, yet what he most loved was the restless human drama which continually unfolded itself before his gaze. His going to Rome in the footsteps of Fortuny and Villegas, proved, like Sorolla's Italian interlude, a blunder, for there was little this bright-eyed Montañese could learn under the shadow of Raphael, or of Michelangelo, the stormy, solitary Titan of the Renaissance. After floundering about for some weeks he was threatened with the fever, and at length wisely turned his face towards Paris. For reasons less picturesque than economic he settled first on the heights of Montmartre, in the rue Cortot, directly behind the gleaming basilica of Sacré-Cœur. He began painting portraits and street views, none of which he could sell, and lived in practical isolation, almost his only companions being two compatriots, a sculptor and a painter, as ambitious and as poverty-stricken as himself.

Although during the succeeding five years Zuloaga experienced the most utter misery and disappointment, the sturdy independence of his temper never relaxed. He studied alone,

refusing to cheapen his ideals or to scramble into recognition by clinging to the coat-tails of Bouguereau, Lefebvre, or Gérôme. During those dark, hopeless days which the artist cannot, even now, recall without an involuntary shudder, he moved many times, invariably by request, living by turns in the rue Durantin and the rue des Saules, and also frequenting the little Spanish colony in the île Saint-Louis of which Rusiñol was the most prominent member. On several occasions Zuloaga collected in his own humble studio, or in one he borrowed for the purpose, a number of canvases. These he showed to his friends and a stray dealer or two, yet invariably without material result. Though he failed to dispose of a single picture the entire time, it is possible that this shabby and pathetic probation was, on the whole, beneficial. It proved at all events that Paris was not the place for him, so after a brief sojourn in London, where he painted a few portraits, he returned to Spain, making Seville his headquarters. It was there, under the burning blue of his native sky, not amid the pearl-grey mist which bathes Paris, that Zuloaga's powers began to expand. It was the Calle de las Sierpes and the Paseo de las Delicias, not the Champs-Élysées or the Bois de Boulogne, which arrested his maturing fancy. The painter must vaguely have been hungering all the while for home, for he soon saw afresh the colour and felt anew the magic fascination of life in each section of the Andalucian capital. Like a true son of Spain he devoted himself to the interpretation of character in all its primal flavour and accent. A pronounced love of humanity animated even those first somewhat rigid and forbidding attempts which were so instinct with quiet restraint and histrionic veracity. Retaining meantime his connections with Paris, he sent to the Salon two portraits, one of his grandmother, and one of ' The Dwarf, Dom Pedro,' and the following year exhibited several canvases under the progressive though spasmodic auspices of Le Barc de Boutte-

LOLA, THE GITANA

By Ignacio Zuloaga

[*Possession of M. Henry Marcel, Paris*]

ville. Though his work was already individual in treatment and conception, his success was only a fraction more encouraging than before. The French public was not ready to welcome a talent which was soon to capture all Europe, nor were the artist's years of obscure endeavour yet at an end. Moreover, the Spain which this young Basque painted with such refined, silver-black severity was not the Spain to which Parisians, or indeed Spaniards, were accustomed. It had nothing of the sparkling, rococo daintiness of Fortuny, nor did it suggest the chromolithography of the industrious Jules Worms. Ignacio Zuloaga was bridging over an immediate and invertebrate past. He was deliberately going back to Goya, and even beyond him. He was reading Spanish types and traits closer and deeper than they had been read for at least a century.

Despairing not of his art, but of his ability to earn even a meagre living by the brush, Zuloaga was for the time being forced to renounce painting. Although he might have returned any moment to that big, sixteenth-century house with its massive stairway and great, spacious rooms, he was too proud to think of anything in the nature of a compromise. Possessing a passion for the past and all that appertains to bygone days, he struggled along for awhile as a dealer in antiques. Finding few clients, he was later compelled to accept a modest clerical position with a mining company, but being inapt at figures, his services were quickly dispensed with, and he again found himself adrift. During the two following years he travelled from place to place, turning his hand to anything he could find and enriching his vision through direct contact with humanity in every quarter of the Peninsula. He lived with the muleteers in the mountains, with the superstitious fanatics of Anso in Aragon, and with the cutthroats of Las Batuecas on the Portuguese frontier. There was literally nothing this resolute, voluntary exile would not, and did not, suffer rather than acknowledge

defeat. Finally, like many another of his courageous, clean-limbed countrymen, he entered the bull-ring as a pupil of the famous Carmona. The experience was not without precedent, even for an artist, the volcanic Goya having years before worked his way to the coast as a picador in his efforts to reach Rome. In spite of a brilliant beginning Zuloaga was not, however, destined to duplicate the suave triumphs of Cúchares or Lagartijillo. After ceremoniously despatching eighteen bulls the young espada was severely gored by the nineteenth, and, in consequence, promised his distracted mother never to re-enter the arena. It was while recuperating at the home of his uncle in ascetic yet langorous Segovia that he returned to art with renewed enthusiasm, executing, among other works, the memorable triple portrait of 'Daniel Zuloaga and his Daughters.' The picture proved the turning-point of his career. It was easily the feature of the Salon of 1899 and was at once purchased for the Luxembourg, which has since become so partial to the younger Spanish artists. The painter-bull-fighter's wanderings were for the time being over. He settled down to his life task in a mood of manful sincerity and with each effort showed increasing decision of choice and distinction of style. Like Fortuny, who caught his single gleam of truth and reality from the sun-scorched battle-fields of Morocco, it required a taste of that passionate, animated outdoor existence which his countrymen so love, to vivify the art of Ignacio Zuloaga. The years of waiting had not been wasted. Nothing he had witnessed during that active, observant period was ever lost or ever went for naught. The entire cycle of popular life and character was at his finger-tips. He was at last able to give that intense impression of things seen which has ever been the dominant note of Spanish painting.

It was but natural, after having so long been held in abeyance, that the artist's productive powers should have asserted

themselves in no halting manner. Encouraged at last by the fruits of success he devoted himself with ample, masterful energy to the transcription of those grave or sprightly, those sullen or vivacious, native types which have since become the insignia of his work the world over. Once launched upon its course, his star flashed with dazzling rapidity across the firmament of Continental art. Spain alone hesitated to recognize or honour him, not the least of his early humiliations being the refusal of the local jury to accept three important canvases for admission to the Spanish section at the Paris Exposition of 1900. His pronounced anti-academic propensities, his unswerving independence of attitude, and the fact that he had never risked formalizing his talent by tedious study at the schools were points which these punctilious gentlemen were incapable of overlooking. Barcelona, with its progressive Catalan initiative, was the sole Spanish city to open its gates to the newcomer, and for Barcelona he has always retained a special fondness, sending, indeed, to last season's International Exposition no less than thirty-four subjects which occupied, in all, two entire rooms. The check which he had received at the hands of his compatriots proved only momentary, for his chagrin at not being represented at Paris was quickly forgotten with the triumphant reception of the rejected pictures at the Libre Esthétique in Brussels and the immediate purchase of one of them for the Modern Gallery of the Belgian capital. During the past half-dozen years Zuloaga has been a favourite of each Salon, as well as a frequent contributor to the annual displays in Berlin, Dresden, Munich, Vienna, Venice, and London, where he invariably divides notice with the strongest and most advanced men of the day. At the Düsseldorf Exhibition of 1904 he was awarded the distinction, accorded only to Menzel, Rodin, and himself, of being assigned a special room, where eighteen representative works were placed on view. Almost a score of European museums possess pictures

from his tireless brush, and there is at the present moment practically no living artist whose productions are more sought after, or which command higher figures, than those of this painter of eight-and-thirty who, a decade ago, was unable to boast a single patron or purchaser.

There should be no difficulty in accounting for the vogue of Ignacio Zuloaga. It was an ethnic as well as an aesthetic thrill which this young Spaniard gave the world of art, a world satiated with studio abstractions and weary of academic conventions. It is to the lasting honour of Zuloaga that he has dedicated his powers to the delineation of episodes and incidents with which he is familiar, not to themes for which he has little sympathy or of which he possesses scant knowledge. It is because he touches life at first hand, and because he has never been paralyzed by routine that his work reflects so abundantly that racial quality which is its chief characteristic, and, in a sense, its main reason for existence. Always regional, always topical, there is about these paintings an ethnographical fidelity which is unmistakable. Not only is it immediately apparent that these subjects are Spanish, it is also possible to tell from what province they come and to what particular social stratum they belong. In the hundred-odd canvases which Zuloaga has placed to his credit can be studied as nowhere, save from the originals themselves, those deep-rooted factors which have moulded into distinct types the seductive Andaluz, the aggressive Basque, the haughty Castilian, or the sturdy, half-Moorish Valencian. The triumph of this latest recruit to be admitted to the category of the masters recalls the triumph of Spanish painting in its days of glory. His art, like that of his great, austere predecessors, is an art which is based upon observation, which is founded upon the realities of the world external and the world internal. Like the solemn, disdainful Velázquez, Zuloaga cares for little beside truth and a compelling manipulative mastery.

PROMENADE AFTER THE BULL-FIGHT

By Ignacio Zuloaga

[*Courtesy of the artist*]

He never leaves the realm of fact or of accurately specialized feeling. The faces one meets in his huge, affirmative pictures are the faces known to Spanish art, as well as to Spanish society, for centuries. Unbroken and scarcely unchanged throughout the ages have come down to us profiles that are Caesarean, a dusky beauty that is Saracenic, and the erect carriage of cavaliers whose insolent grace was the marvel of many a European battle-field. If Zuloaga's men and women suggest those of Il Greco or Velázquez, it is because he is depicting their very descendants, not simply imitating the modes of former days. The grave seigniors of each Pintor del Cámara still walk the streets of Madrid muffled in their dark cloaks, the pallid ascetics of Zurbarán still live among the Andalucian mountains, and the same dwarfs and beggars that look from the walls of the Prado also shuffle by in tattered swarms or sun themselves beside church door. Behind Zuloaga's expressive silhouettes, just as behind 'Philip' and 'Baltasar Carlos' sweep the grey-toned landscapes of Castile and Aragon. From first to last Spanish art has remained objective and positive. It was for long periods ardently Christian, but was never enslaved by the sensuous afterglow of paganism nor has it since become sentimental or fantastic. Painters of other lands have enjoyed the widest latitude. The truly Spanish artist has from the beginning known but two sources of inspiration—Church and Country. Though there is much in Zuloaga's work which goes further back—back to the noble hauteur of the early manner—he continues more specifically the legacy of the belligerent and mercurial Goya. The spirit of Goya's 'Manolas on the Balcony' is the spirit of the younger man's production. While Zuloaga's sense of colour is far richer and more sonorous, he shares both the acidity and the nervous alertness of the man who was the true parent of present-day Spanish painting, who was, in fact, the last of old masters and the first of moderns.

Essentially a rationalist in feeling, Zuloaga is little concerned with sacred or pietistic themes. He is content to portray man and woman amid the incidental occupations or diversions of quotidian existence. It is thus to Velázquez and Goya rather than to the fanatical realism of Ribera or the more chastened ecstasy of Zurbarán that he reverts in the matter of choice of subject. It is the world of to-day that he sets in motion before the eyes, and to which he adds his brilliant sobriety of tint and frankly effective taste for composition. Although there is no phase of contemporary activity with which he is not conversant, it is the purely exterior aspects that most attract him. A street scene, a group of women leaning from the window, or a glimpse of the crowded arena, are sufficient to furnish him with the requisite graphic essentials. His vision was never bounded by the grim walls and gloomy corridors of the Alcázar. All Spain lay open to him, and in his paintings all Spain finds its echo. During those first wonderfully expansive years when he was winning his initial laurels in Paris and in Germany, his vivacity and fecundity were little short of phenomenal. Each effort was a fresh triumph. The success of 'Daniel Zuloaga and his Daughters,' with its trinity of dark-clad figures standing sharp against the blue Segovian sky and wide-horizon plain, was quickly followed by the fluent pictorial elegance of the 'Promenade after the Bull-fight,' a canvas which, for versatile beauty of colouration and flexible, authoritative handling, he has never surpassed. In the old, lean days, which, in truth, were not so long since, when he exhibited in the rue Le Peletier, it was "White Spain" which he chiefly painted. As his eye became more eager, and his palette more opulent, he added tone after tone. While affecting none of the crude glitter of certain of his colleagues he gradually grew enamoured of deep reds, raisin-browns, olive-greens, orange-yellows, and the cerulean intensity of cloudless firmament. Not infrequently, when Anglada and

THE PICADOR, EL CORIANO

By Ignacio Zuloaga

[*Courtesy of the artist*]

he would send their throbbing canvases to foreign exhibitions, it became necessary to redecorate the room in which they were hung, or at all events to exercise the most scrupulous care respecting their entourage. Something in the nature of a subtle contempt for less lavishly endowed talents seems always to linger about these pictures which, one and all, pulsate with the torrid blood of the Peninsula. Though their schemes are often sober and contained, even black assumes with these men, as it does with Velázquez, the properties of a colour. With rare exceptions they do not employ the broken tones of their French contemporaries. While the more Parisian Anglada at times recalls Besnard, both Sorolla and Zuloaga prefer full brushes and a broad, sweeping stroke.

It is not alone society on dress parade which Zuloaga has portrayed. He has also descended into that dark and semi-savage underworld of love, passion, and hatred which seethes about the roots of the Spanish tree of life. He knows intimately the majas and gitanas of the Sevillian Triana, and naturally they, too, often figure in his work with their glistening, carnivorous teeth, their avid glances, and insinuating gait. Here also, has he extended the scope of art, and added, at least pictorially, to the varied treasury of human emotion. The infectious and somewhat ingenuous coquetry of ' Lola ' blends into a more deliberate and insistent artifice with the painted and pencilled Carmens of the ' Calle del Amor.' The expectant charm of ' Consuelo's ' pose becomes alive with rhythmic, frenetic fire in ' The Spanish Dancers.' A thick coating of rice powder and a saffron-hued mantilla are the badges of these wilful, unredeemed creatures who ever lie in wait for the weak or the unwary yet who never found their true interpreter until Zuloaga rendered them in all their flaunting, instinctive primity. Although women predominate, it is not woman alone that the painter depicts, for numerous canvases have been dedicated to

the most obviously masculine creations Spain has thus far produced—the picador, the matador, and the torero. For blunt, ruthless power of individualization the scarred, leathery countenance of ' El Coriano ' occupies a place by itself in this gallery of corrida heroes, nor has the artist since excelled the stolid standing likeness of ' El Buñolero,' about whom clings the mingled dust and blood of countless bull-ring combats. Still another territory has been conquered by this ready pioneer of the brush. It is the shabby, shifting kingdom of laconic dwarfs, ragged mendicants, bronzed water-carriers, or itinerate fruit-venders, which forms such an integral portion of Spanish life. Needless to add, he is as much at home in the province of the picaresque as anywhere else, since it is a world which has been peculiarly dear to Peninsular author and artist since the days of Hurtado de Mendoza and Murillo. For anything comparable to ' Segovians Drinking ' or the sun-tanned and doubtless salacious interlocutor in ' A Passing Sally ' it is, however, necessary to go back to ' The Topers ' of the Prado. The softly affable Murillo never had at his command such a fund of sardonic strength or such stark brutality of statement. In the treatment of single figure, or of larger composition, in his likeness of the poet, ' Don Miguel,' the dancer, ' Lolita,' or in the ' Bull-fight in my Village,' Zuloaga, during those early years, displayed the same fullness of vision and completeness of suggestion. Characteristic strips of landscape always stretched away from each group giving that sense of receding space which is one of the special charms of these pictures. Each and all, they were supremely effective in placing and arrangement. While the painter made no undue sacrifices to attain an immediate, instantaneous appeal, he seemed to possess, in a superlative degree, the scenic gift.

Though Zuloaga lives nominally at Eibar, or in Paris, he is in reality an insatiate wanderer. He owns no regular studio,

but carries about with him over the rugged face of Spain brushes, colours and canvas, selecting whatever fits his mood or his feeling for the picturesque. He will hastily install an assortment of local models in a room in his hotel, in sunlit courtyard, or on sloping sierra-side open to the sky and the four winds of heaven. It is unknown, and almost inaccessible Spain that he constantly seeks, and the most savage and solitary corners of the kingdom are his familiar haunts. His experiences have been innumerable, and he does not hesitate to recount them with a fund of illuminative detail. In the course of these pilgrimages he has often been forced to subsist upon roots, like the poorest peasant, and has at times encountered the most irredeemable ignorance and suspicion. A few years since, in Salamanca, he was accused, with considerably less authority than was the irascible Herrera in his day, of being a counterfeiter, and not long afterward, while alone in his automobile, he was mistaken for the devil and knocked insensible by a vicious and well-directed hail of missiles. It was his somewhat mixed pleasure to discover, on a certain memorable occasion, that even in the hidden recesses of his beloved country the higher claims of art are treated seriously. When he was one day disposing his impromptu models for a large and important composition the members of one group did not fancy the way those for another portion of the scheme were posing, and on expressing their disapproval, a conflict was precipitated with the result that not enough able-bodied participants were left with which to complete the picture. Nor was it without a touch of discretionary agility that the unwitting cause of the mêlée rolled up his big, wet canvas and departed for more pacific surroundings. Of late these expeditions have increased, rather than diminished, in number and in frequency. Almost every summer Zuloaga spends several weeks on tour, often accompanied by his greatest friend and admirer, Auguste Rodin, who is unfailingly enthusi-

astic over the plastic grace and sculpturesque mien of even the sorriest wayfarer who, as a rule, comports himself like a soldier of Spinola or, indeed, some far off Arab tribesman.

Next to painting, Zuloaga prefers the eager joys and unexpected triumphs of the antiquary and the collector, the rewards of recent years having enabled him to accumulate a remarkable array of Spanish masters numbering some three hundred in all. With his knowledge of art both classic and contemporary, and his unequalled opportunities, he has managed to acquire for a mere pittance several of the foremost existing examples of Il Greco and Goya, the two men in which his gallery is richest. In order properly to house his purchases he has built himself a miniature museum in the garden adjoining the family home at Eibar, and now, as always, the twin sources of his inspiration remain the simple dignity of the ancient world and the shifting pageant of modern life. With each year, almost, his field changes. He has latterly forsaken the bespangled attractions of Seville's Macarena, and at present prefers the vineyards of La Rioja where he is engaged in painting the local saturnalia. Still another departure is a poignant, Dantesque conception entitled ' The Penitents,' which is full of dramatic, sanguinary frenzy. Isolated figures of trenchant power and intensity such as ' The Old Hermit ' and ' The Image Seller ' add further diversity to a production which shows but slight diminution either in range or in quality. There are, nevertheless, a few dissenting voices among the former devotees of Zuloaga's work. It is hinted that he has exhausted his originality and piquancy, that his more recent types seem pattern-made and lacking in verve and spontaneity. In a limited degree such strictures are not without foundation, nor, considering certain factors in his progress and development, could it hardly be otherwise. He has seen everything and remembers accurately everything he has seen. The material for his paintings circles about him in a

continuous series of picturesque and variegated panoramas. The temptation to arrest the revolutions of this moving picture apparatus and to repeat given gestures, attitudes, groups, and scenes has not always been resisted. Touches of the arbitrary and the automatic are here and there visible. In more than one instance the human equation has been overemphasized, and now and then, as for example in ' Lassitude,' the scarlet trail of the serpent spreads itself across an art never, in fact, far removed from the bypaths of sensuality.

Granting the force of his handling and his manifest faculty for characterization it is none the less evident that Zuloaga lacks the splendid, salubrious vitality of his Valencian colleague Sorolla, whose spirit is ever refreshed by the brisk sea wind and the inexhaustible fertility of nature. With no such counterpoise there is a possibility of his entering and remaining inside that hot prison-house of passion at the doors of which he now stands. And, moreover, the sudden and widespread vogue which he has enjoyed has perhaps bred within him a certain lack of vigilance, a suspicion of that easeful arrogance and superiority which have more than once proved disastrous to the race to which he belongs. Alike in its virtues and its defects, there are numerous hereditary affinities between the art of Zuloaga and the art of his great forebears of the brush, just as there are between the Spain of yesterday and the Spain of to-day. It would hence be manifestly absurd to expect a man of Zuloaga's birth and training to be other than he is, or to paint other than he has painted. However insistent and emphatic it may seem to us, the ardent pictorialism of his manner is essentially true to Peninsular life and traditions. Those identical qualities which appear unreal to foreign eyes, are in fact reality of the most pronounced type; and herein lies the strength of an art the graphic verity of which, though at times somewhat formal and summary, must nevertheless remain unquestioned. And,

after all, Zuloaga has amply earned the right to depict his country and his countrymen as he may see fit. He is a Spaniard through and through. He has read Spanish character in its most secret and intimate phases, and no one knows better than he that behind the laugh of cigarrera and the defiant bearing of torero lurks a latent diabolism which has not yet been subdued. Nor does anyone realize more clearly that the majority of his own virile, sultry figures are stencilled against a background which still remains sinister and inscrutable.

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